

Harpers Ferry Center
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



Natchez Trace Parkway Long-Range Interpretive Plan February 2016



Prepared by
Department of the Interior
National Park Service
Harpers Ferry Center
Interpretive Planning

COVER
The Natchez Trace Parkway commemorates
10,000 years of travel.
Credit: NPS/© Marc Muench

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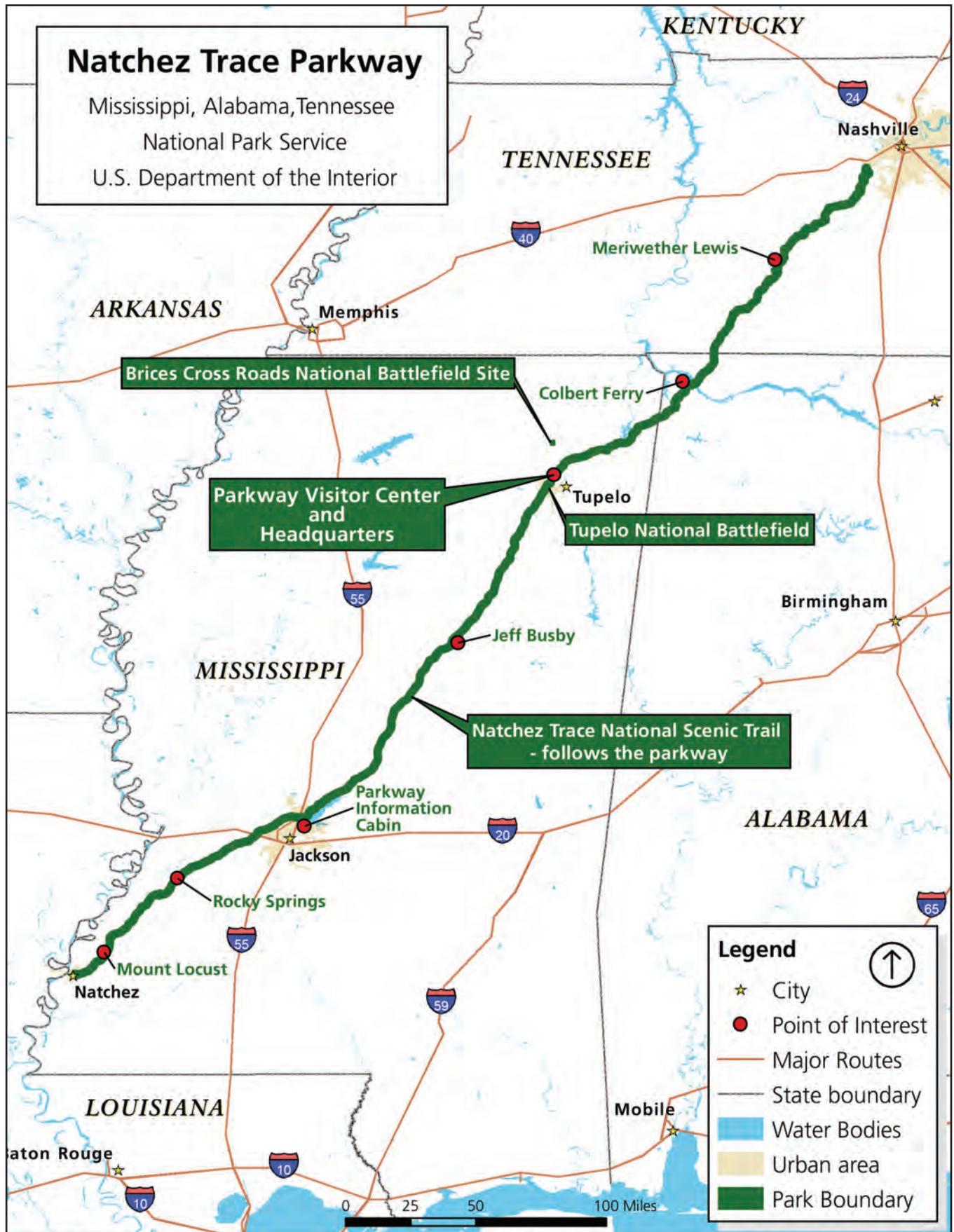
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Map
Credit: NPS

Natchez Trace Parkway

Mississippi, Alabama, Tennessee
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior





Introduction

About Interpretive Planning

This Long-Range Interpretive Plan (LRIP) outlines recommendations for future interpretive services, facilities, media, and community relationships. During the planning process, park staff, partners, and stakeholders worked together to develop a comprehensive tool that outlines visitor experiences, education, and recreation opportunities through which audiences can connect to the resources and stories of a park. The goal is to promote park resource values through purposefully planned audience experiences.

This plan was built on the park's Foundation Document (2014). It clarifies interpretive themes, describes visitor experience goals, and recommends a wide variety of personal and non-personal interpretive services plus community involvement activities that will best communicate the Parkway's purpose, significance, and primary stories. It satisfies the requirement for an interpretive plan as established in Director's Order #6. (<http://www.nps.gov/policy/DOrders/Dorder6.html>)

An interdisciplinary team of NPS staff, stakeholders, and partners met in March and April 2015 to review portions of the Foundation Document, specifically purpose, significance, and interpretive themes. The group vetted the themes for relevance, bias, and current scholarship. Stakeholders provided input during a series of meetings held in four locations along the Parkway.

A Recommendations Workshop held in August 2015 with staff and key stakeholders created the Action Plan in Part 2. Park staff conducted additional meetings to further refine content and recommendations.

Recommendations about visitor experience, media, services, and programming will be updated at least annually and as staffing, funding, technology, or resource conditions change. Further planning may be done and design documents created to implement some of the goals and recommendations in this plan.

The Birdsong Hollow Bridge exemplifies the graceful design of the Natchez Trace Parkway.
Milepost 438
Credit: NPS/© Marc Muench



Old Trace travelers sought the path of least resistance as they avoided water or other natural obstacles.

Milepost 42

Credit: NPS/© Marc Muench

Background

Congress created the Natchez Trace Parkway as a unit of the National Park System in 1938 to commemorate the historic travel corridor known as the Natchez Trace (referred to in this document as the “Old Trace”).

The Old Trace is one of the oldest transportation routes in North America; its human use dates back 10,000 years. The modern Parkway stretches 444 miles and takes more than 11 hours to drive from end to end. It passes through three states, 25 counties, and 20 communities. The combined residential population of the counties it passes through is nearly two million. In addition, there are more than 3,000 commercial and private landowners immediately adjacent to the Parkway boundary.

The Old Trace consisted of a network of trails. For centuries, American Indians traveled and traded along this corridor, which traverses the homelands of the Natchez, Chickasaw, and Choctaw nations. By 1785, the Old Trace was used as a transportation route for boatmen who floated down the Mississippi River to sell their goods in Natchez and New Orleans. Future presidents, traveling preachers, settlers, enslaved people, and soldiers also traveled along the Old Trace. In 1800, President John Adams designated it as a US postal route on what was then the western frontier.

It is also the death and burial site of Governor Meriwether Lewis, who died along the Old Trace in 1809. This site was originally commemorated as the Meriwether Lewis National Monument, but was added to the Natchez Trace Parkway by an act of Congress in 1961.

General Andrew Jackson used the Old Trace for moving volunteer militia and regular army troops during the War of 1812. The Trail of Tears crosses the Parkway in four different locations. Civil War battles occurred in and around the Old Trace corridor. The modern Parkway was completed in 2005

and now covers one of the largest geographic ranges of any unit in the National Park System. The Parkway corridor, which spans five degrees of latitude, includes 52,000 acres of scenic, natural, cultural, and historic resources representing a variety of southern landscapes—forests, wetlands, prairies, rivers, pastures, and croplands. In 1996, the Natchez Trace Parkway was designated a National Scenic Byway and All-American Road for its significant historic, cultural, natural, and scenic qualities.

In 1983, Congress designated the Natchez Trace National Scenic Trail (NATT) as a separate unit of the National Park Service (NPS). NATT consists of several components of the Parkway corridor, including the 444-mile paved roadway and 66 miles of foot and horse trails, some of which follow segments of the Old Trace. These segments of the trail parallel Natchez Trace Parkway in five different areas from middle Tennessee to southern Mississippi.

Brices Cross Roads National Battlefield Site and Tupelo National Battlefield are legislated NPS units that commemorate two Civil War battles that occurred in northern Mississippi. These two battles were important in the eventual success of Union Major General William T. Sherman’s Atlanta Campaign. The two units were created by Congress in 1929 and are now managed by Natchez Trace Parkway staff.

A photograph of a forest path. The path is covered in fallen leaves and leads into the distance. Large trees with thick trunks line the path, and their roots are exposed on the forest floor. The foliage is dense, with some leaves showing autumn colors like yellow and orange. Sunlight filters through the trees, creating a warm, golden glow. The text "Part 1 Foundation" is overlaid on the upper part of the image.

Part 1 Foundation

Official Designations

Natchez Trace Parkway is unique among federal recreational motorways because it commemorates an earlier transportation route.

Official designations (dates):

- National Parkway, National Park Service (5/18/38).
- National Forest Scenic Byway, 4-mile segment that bisects the Tombigbee National Forest, US Forest Service (12/4/90).
- AAA Scenic Byway, American Automobile Association (4/10/91).
- All-American Road and National Scenic Byway, Federal Highway Administration (9/23/96).
- Natchez Trace National Scenic Trail, National Park Service (five segments parallel the parkway (3/28/83).

Brices Cross Roads National Battlefield Site was established February 21, 1929, and transferred from the War Department to the NPS on August 10, 1933. The battlefield was listed on the National Register of Historic Places on October 15, 1966, and is administered by the Natchez Trace Parkway.

Established February 21, 1929, Tupelo National Battlefield was transferred from the War Department on August 10, 1933. The battlefield was listed on the National Register of Historic Places on October 15, 1966, and is administered by the Natchez Trace Parkway.

In 1961, Congress delegated administration of the Meriwether Lewis National Monument (Meriwether Lewis Death and Burial Site) and Ackia Battlefield (now the Chickasaw Village site) to the Natchez Trace Parkway. Today, historians believe that the Ackia Battlefield is not inside the Parkway boundary.

Park Purpose

A purpose statement identifies the specific reason(s) for establishing a particular park. The purpose statement for Natchez Trace Parkway was drafted through an analysis of its enabling legislation and legislative history.

The Parkway's Foundation Document identified the following purpose statement:

The Natchez Trace Parkway commemorates 10,000 years of travel along the Old Natchez Trace corridor and provides a 444-mile journey linking culture, nature, and history along one of the oldest transportation routes on the North American continent.

Park Significance

Significance statements express why a park's resources and values are important enough to merit designation as a unit of the National Park System. These statements are linked to the purpose of Natchez Trace Parkway and are supported by data, research, and consensus. Statements of significance describe the distinctive nature of a park and why an area is important within a global, national, regional, and system wide context. They focus on the most important resources and values that will assist in park planning and management.

The Parkway's Foundation Document identified the following significance statements. (Please note that the sequence of the statements does not reflect the level of significance.)

- As one of the oldest transportation routes, the Old Natchez Trace travel corridor has been an avenue of travel, trade, change, conflict, and communication for more than 10,000 years. It is now honored as a designed landscape, making the Natchez Trace the only parkway to commemorate an ancient travel route.
- Many native peoples, including the Chickasaw, Choctaw, and Natchez tribes, created vibrant cultures that thrived for thousands of years along what is now the Natchez Trace Parkway. Today, the Parkway links more than 350 archeological sites and 22 burial and ceremonial mounds, including Emerald Mound, the second-largest mound in the United States.

- The Parkway's uninterrupted corridor traverses over five degrees of latitude, includes seven major ecoregions, protects more than 2,600 species (some rare, threatened, and endangered), and preserves and restores historic landscape vegetation.
- The Old Natchez Trace played an important role in the development of the nation by providing a route to facilitate trade, settlement, and transportation throughout the Old Southwest. Notably, parts of the route were widened by the military in the early 1800s and then used by General Andrew Jackson to move volunteer militia and regular army troops to and from the Battle of New Orleans.

The Parkway's Foundation Document identified the following significance statement for Brices Cross Roads National Battlefield Site and Tupelo National Battlefield:

Brices Cross Roads and Tupelo (Harrisburg) were two battles late in the American Civil War critical to the protection of the single-track railroad that provided supplies to the Union Army during Sherman's Atlanta Campaign.

Parkway Interpretive Themes

Interpretive themes often are described as the key stories or concepts that audiences should understand after visiting a park—they define the most important ideas or concepts communicated to visitors about a park unit. Themes are derived from, and should reflect, park purpose and significance. A set of interpretive themes is complete when it provides the structure necessary for park staff to develop opportunities for audiences to explore and relate to all park significance statements.

Interpretive themes are an organizational tool to reveal and clarify meaning, concepts, contexts, and values represented by park resources. Sound themes are accurate and reflect current scholarship and science. They encourage exploration of the context in which events or natural processes occurred and the effects of those events and processes.

Interpretive themes go beyond a mere description of an event or process to foster multiple opportunities to experience and consider the park and its resources. These themes help explain why a park story is relevant to people who may otherwise be unaware of connections they have to an event, time, or place associated with a park.

The Parkway's Foundation Document identified four primary interpretive themes for Natchez Trace Parkway. Workshops with staff and stakeholders, held in March and April of 2015, suggested more specific stories that relate to each primary theme. As is the case with any NPS unit that has a rich history with many layers, themes often overlap. Specific stories may relate to more than a single theme.



A park ranger interprets boatmen of the past to a group of interested students.
Credit: NPS



At eight acres, Emerald Mound is the largest mound on the Parkway. Milepost 10.3
Credit: NPS/© Marc Muench

Homelands in Transition

Generations of American Indian occupation of these lands came to an end as Americans migrated westward. Many remnants of these American Indian cultures remain on the Parkway landscape and help convey to visitors the story of tribal displacement and American expansion in the Old Southwest.

Some of the important stories associated with this theme include:

- Sites within the Parkway boundary remain central to the lives of native peoples removed from their traditional homeland, providing links that enable and encourage cultural and spiritual survival, renewal, and vitality.
- The history of contact between native peoples, European colonists, and later state and federal government officials provides insights into the strategic negotiations that attempted to preserve tribal lands and ways of life, and the treaty cessions that forced the removal of native peoples.
- Andrew Jackson's use of Natchez Trace during the War of 1812 was an early episode in a much longer chronicle of his rise to fame as a general and politician and the convoluted and periodically antagonistic relationship between Jackson and the tribes in the region, culminating in the Trail of Tears.
- The trail networks commemorated by the Parkway served as a magnet for newcomers, first introducing them to the region and then enticing them to settle and make it home.
- As newcomers entered the region via the travel corridor's trail network, they brought change that influenced and often challenged existing ways of life,

initiating a process of transition that continues into the current century.

- Immigrants who used the Old Trace to settle in the Old Southwest in the late 18th and early 19th centuries increased pressure for Indian removal.
- Chickasaw, Choctaw, Creek, Cherokee, and others faced settlement pressure and eventually ceded millions of acres of their homelands to the US. During removal to Indian Territory, several tribes crossed the Natchez Trace; the Trail of Tears crosses the Natchez Trace Parkway in four locations.

goods imported from hundreds of miles away.

- Economic opportunity enticed thousands of farmers/boatmen from the Ohio River Valley to float goods and supplies to downstream markets in Natchez and New Orleans. In 1810, as many as 10,000 boatmen faced the hardships of Old Trace travel to return home.
- The history of the Old Trace includes many stories of conflict among diverse groups and individuals including inter-tribal warfare, colonial warfare, slave trading and enslavement, the War of 1812, Indian removal and the Trail of Tears, and the Civil War.

Travel and Trade

The Old Natchez Trace served as a prominent route of travel, trade, and communication; it became an avenue of change for a new nation.

Some of the important stories associated with this theme include:

- The daily lives of those who chose to settle along the Old Trace offer insights into 10,000 years of history, helping contemporary visitors understand how life, livelihood, and culture have evolved over time.
- The social history of the Old Trace lives on in the biographies of both residents and travelers, individuals as well as groups who viewed this as their homeland and others who passed through sowing ideas, attitudes, and trade
- The forced migration, associated with chattel slavery, begun before Indian removal and continued through the Civil War, introduced cruel inequities into Old Trace history reinforced by the plantation economy that took root in many places along the corridor.
- Embedded in the mystique of the Old Trace are stories of crime and outlaws and, although the historical record is largely silent on actual criminal activity, oral history and popular culture have elevated outlaws to legendary status.
- Just as Natchez Trace Parkway is part of much larger systems (the National Park System, the parkway/byway movement, All-American Roads, etc.) for thousands of years the Old Trace was just one segment of trade

and travel networks that linked people and markets hundreds of miles away.

- For millennia, the natural world within the travel corridor has provided residents with the resources they needed to build lives, sustain families, and express their creativity.
- The commodities traded along the Old Trace network reflect changing times. Those trade goods shed light on what different cultures valued most, from the natural materials and ceremonial objects that changed hands during the Middle Woodland period to the economic competition that fueled conflict during the colonial era through the cotton and enslaved workers that supported the plantation economy of the antebellum era.
- By funneling trade and travelers into the Old Trace travel corridor, both Natchez and Nashville played such critical, interconnected roles in Natchez Trace history that it is impossible to separate one story from the other.

Pathway to Parkway

The Parkway demonstrates the evolution of transportation methods and technology, the social changes that occurred throughout the decades as the Old Southwest became the American South, and changes in the nation's recreational values over time.

Some of the important stories associated with this theme include:

- The evolving network of trails that predates the Parkway reflects the diversity of users and travel motivations.
- When the network of tribal trails also became a post road, it influenced and ultimately altered life for the Chickasaw and Choctaw. It also served its intended purpose of linking the Old Southwest to the rest of the nation and enabling development of territorial government.
- For several decades in the early 19th century, travel along the Old Trace, although improved, remained a challenging adventure in survival and, for some, a defining chapter in their lives.
- After the 1820s and 1830s, as the portions of the Old Trace receded, local counties integrated portions of trace into their road system and continued to use and maintain them to link and fuel the growth of towns and cities throughout the travel corridor.
- There has always been an economic component to both the Old Trace and the Parkway; both have added economic value to settlements along their route.
- Since the history of the travel corridor never stopped evolving, the years between the 1830s and the present contributed many chapters to regional and national history including stories related to: Indian removal; the Civil War; plantation economics;

emancipation; Reconstruction and Jim Crow; development of local folkways and regional culture; the Parkway Movement; the New Deal with its Works Progress Administration and Civilian Conservation Corps; and historic preservation.

- The Parkway is a prime example of a sustained, determined preservation effort that now spans over a century from its grass roots origins through the infusion of federal dollars and leadership to the present day cooperative efforts of the NPS, Natchez Trace Parkway Association, and Natchez Trace Compact partners.
- Women played a critical role in commemorating the Old Trace, generating support for creation of the Parkway, and sustaining interest in the history and preservation of both the Old Trace and Parkway.
- Because the Parkway took decades to complete, different segments of the highway and landscape reflect the evolution of construction techniques and materials.
- A comparison of the Old Trace and the Parkway reveals significant differences in purpose including the shift from trade and communication to recreational access and the dominance (and travel requirements) of automobiles.

Inspiration and Preservation

The Parkway is a vulnerable greenbelt that provides habitat for wildlife and promotes emotional connections to Parkway resources.

The Parkway also fosters a sense of discovery that allows modern visitors to appreciate the park's natural and cultural history.

Some of the important stories associated with this theme include:

- The Parkway is a carefully designed modern highway planned to elicit a slower pace of life, showcase the region's agrarian landscape, and provide entree to sites that commemorate the long history of the Old Trace.
- Natchez Trace Parkway is an example of the successful application of federal resources, prompted by local and regional concerns and the Parkway Movement of the 20th century to the commemoration, preservation, and interpretation of the past via scenic and well-designed, well-engineered construction projects.
- Many chapters in the history of the Old Trace have a spiritual component beginning with the sacred mounds that date to the Woodland and Mississippian periods to itinerant preachers who brought their religions to the Old Southwest frontier to modern-day homage paid to the mounds, cemeteries, and burials within Parkway boundaries.
- Through the landscapes, scenery, and connections with nature, as well as through physical links to



The Parkway provides places to appreciate and enjoy a slower pace of life. Milepost 407.7
Credit: NPS/© Marc Muench

park features, the Parkway elicits feelings of spiritual renewal for many visitors today.

- The variety of natural and cultural geography—soils, vegetation, habitats—that has always existed along the Old Trace survives and is preserved along today’s Parkway.
- Maintenance of the Parkway’s evocative greenbelt landscape requires careful attention to the long-term health of native species and vigilance against invasive species.
- Although commemoration of the Old Trace is a central rationale for the Parkway, it also is a beautiful and scenic place with both natural charm and thoughtful design, including graceful construction often symbolized by the award-winning Double Arch Bridge.
- Natchez Trace National Scenic Trail (NATT), the only national trail totally within the boundaries of a national park, provides a distinctive experience for hikers who seek a more intimate connection to the historic American Indian or boatman experiences.
- There has always been a certain vulnerability associated with both the Old Trace and the Parkway. Historically, non-Indian travelers often felt isolated, surrounded by what some perceived as an alien environment.
- Today, the Parkway’s narrow boundaries and physical and scenic encroachments from the outside cause pressure on both the nature of the park and the species that live along the roadside.
- There is a mystique associated with the Old Trace that fueled the Parkway Movement, continues to inspire authors, artists, and artisans, and still entices modern travelers.

The Meriwether Lewis monument is a broken shaft symbolizing a life cut short. Milepost 385.9
Credit: NPS/© Marc Muench



Meriwether Lewis

The death and burial of Meriwether Lewis at Grinder's Stand encourages introspection and exploration of the traits that drive ambition and personal heroics as well as the personal struggles that invite tragedy.

- The life and death of Meriwether Lewis encapsulates both the pinnacle of success and the haunting specter of personal disgrace.
- The final journey of Meriwether Lewis along the Old Trace was a determined quest intent on defending personal reputation and salvaging a political future.
- The circumstances of Meriwether Lewis' death is one of the Parkway's more intriguing episodes, an example of the interface of historical evidence, which strongly supports the probability of suicide, and alternative theories that support the possibility of murder.

- The life and death of Meriwether Lewis is a cautionary and epic tale of history-changing contributions in one chapter of life juxtaposed with other ventures plagued with disappointment and unachieved expectations.
- The site of Grinder's Stand combined with a portion of Old Trace and Lewis' grave and monument provide a compelling location for those seeking to pay homage to one of the more famous heroes of the early republic who traveled along the Trace.
- The long and continuing interest of local communities in Meriwether Lewis, particularly among residents of Lewis County, illustrates the impact of grass roots support for historic preservation, commemoration, and memorialization.

Brices Cross Roads National Battlefield Site, Tupelo National Battlefield, and other Civil War sites along the Old Trace

The Parkway bisects terrain associated with the Battle of Tupelo, and Parkway staff members administer sites connected with Civil War history. The NPS cooperates with partners who focus on Civil War history. It is important that the park and partners have primary interpretive themes with supporting content statements that address the history of those sites.



Brices Cross Road National Battlefield Site is on a portion of the battlefield where Maj. Gen. N.B. Forrest won a brilliant victory over the Union Army.

Civil War Corridor

Sites associated with the Vicksburg Campaign and the Confederate Gravesites along the Old Trace indicate that decades after the heyday of the Old Trace the transportation corridor through which it passed played a role in the Civil War.

- The battles of Brices Cross Roads and Tupelo illustrate the heightened, strategic importance of railroads to warfare during the second half of the 19th century.
- The Battle of Brices Cross Roads, a successful Union diversionary military tactic that kept Confederate Maj. Gen. N.B. Forrest from interfering with Union supply lines, coupled with the Battle of Tupelo just weeks later, allowed Union Maj. Gen. William Sherman to capture Atlanta and complete his March to the Sea.
- Brices Cross Roads, the first opportunity for the 55th and 59th US Colored Troops (USCT) to engage in battle, demonstrated their value to bolstering the Union Army.
- Despite considerable casualties (approximately half of the Union deaths at Brices Cross Roads), USCT troops allowed Union Maj. Gen. Samuel Sturgis' unit to escape certain capture by the Confederate Army.
- Soldiers of the USCT 1st Brigade played a major role in the battle of Tupelo.
- Union Maj. Gen. Andrew J. Smith and the 14,000 soldiers under his command had two primary objectives: to gain control of the railroads that passed through Tupelo and to engage Confederate troops needed elsewhere.

- The Union Army traveled and camped along the Trace during the strategic siege of Vicksburg, one of the most decisive battles of the Civil War.
- After he landed at Port Gibson, Union Maj. Gen. Ulysses Grant used Rocky Springs as a temporary camp for his troops at the beginning the Vicksburg Campaign, the first time that an army in the Civil War survived cut off from supply lines.
- The Battle of Raymond, just west of Jackson, Mississippi, convinced General Grant that he had to capture Jackson to assure that his siege of Vicksburg succeeded.
- At the Baily Farm/Dillon Plantation, the site of Union headquarters during the majority of the Vicksburg siege, Maj. Gen. Grant signed the strategically critical order to attack Jackson.

Audiences

To design the most effective interpretive programming and employ the most effective interpretive techniques, it is critical to identify intended audiences, both existing audiences who actively use site interpretive programs and potential audiences that well-planned interpretation might engage.

The term audience is used purposefully in this document. In the 21st century, it is common to communicate with on-site visitors as well as others who have not or cannot “visit” local sites. Increasingly, for example, digital and social media accessed online are a source of both information and interpretation. While many who use their computer or smartphone as a gateway to a site or region will eventually visit, that is not universally true. In addition, for reasons of time and budget, outreach and school programs might be conducted online or off-site. News and magazine articles as well as television and radio programs or YouTube broadcasts and social media postings reach thousands who fall outside the technical definition of “visitor.”

Dazzling fall colors attract thousands of visitors each season.
Credit: NPS/ J Farmer



Current Audiences

An average of 15 million people travel the Parkway annually. Visitation has been steady since the Parkway was completed in 2005.

In 2014, nearly six million people visited the Parkway for recreation. Although visitation levels are relatively consistent from month to month throughout the year, the highest recreation use occurs in the spring and fall seasons. The Parkway is especially popular during the spring wildflower bloom and during the fall foliage change.

A major user base of the Parkway comes from local residents. In 2014, over nine million users fell into this category. With several major population centers along the Parkway, it serves as an important transportation and commuter corridor. As of the 2010 Census, nearly two million people resided in the 25 counties that the Parkway traverses. That number is expected to rise over the next decade.

Major user groups currently include: motorists, bicyclists, motorcyclists, horseback riders, campers, Lewis and Clark enthusiasts, Chickasaw, Choctaw, Civil War enthusiasts, youth groups, educational institutions, hikers, retirees, and national heritage area tourists.

Targeted Audiences

This section of the plan recognizes that interpretive techniques and audiences are inter-related—some interpretive tools are better adapted to, or appeal to, particular audiences.

All audiences are welcome and invited to participate in the Parkway's interpretive programs, and the Parkway fully intends to sustain service to existing audiences.

In addition, Parkway staff members feel that the following audiences should receive specific attention during the 5-year life of this LRIP, and that planning should develop or enhance interpretive media to help build the Parkway's next generation of constituents by reaching out to:

Local Communities

Although NATR has a long and successful tradition of working with stakeholders and local communities via the Natchez Trace Parkway Association and Natchez Trace Compact, participants at LRIP workshops expressed a desire for expanded interchange of ideas and information including the use of social media and the design of additional strategies for community engagement.

Youth and Millennials

Because continued preservation depends on the support of maturing constituents, interpretation must actively include young audiences through both formal and informal programming and 21st-century media.

Underserved Audiences

Parkway staff members are actively engaged in interpretive and outreach programs designed to expand the diversity of visitors and reach previously underserved groups including Chickasaw, Choctaw, African Americans, and Latinos.

Audience Experiences

While primary themes focus on what audiences will learn as a result of interpretive programs and media, audience experiences explore what audiences will do. For example, consider the following questions. What types of activity will help with orientation and wayfinding? How might the design of interpretive programs and media invite audience involvement, and as a result reinforce key aspects of the Parkway's themes? How can interpretation use the powerful impact of hands-on, sensory activity to send audiences home with lasting memories? How can landscapes be used to bolster audience understanding of the Parkway? And how can interpretation provide audiences with opportunities to find personal meaning in the Parkway's associated stories and personalities?

Discovering the Parkway

Discovery lies at the heart of every Parkway experience. Interpretation must offer opportunities for all Parkway audiences to explore both the history and natural world of the Old Trace.

The Parkway is designed to immerse travelers into a slower paced atmosphere that buffers the impact of 21st-century life. Workshop participants used words like peaceful, beautiful, scenic, spiritual, relaxed, and uncluttered to describe a Parkway journey. They mentioned the strong sense of place and the connections that the Parkway provides to a cross section of thousands of years of history. They felt that interpretation should facilitate immersion into the many layers of history associated with the Old Trace as well as the Parkway's natural environments so alive with species variety and an ever-changing panorama of

A family embarks on a discovery walk at Glen Rock Branch. Milepost 364.5
Credit: NPS/© Marc Muench



seasonal change. Interpretation should remind visitors in subtle and obvious ways that much of the Parkway corridor remains rural and agriculture. Above all, 21st-century travelers should be encouraged to develop the “eyes of a hunter,” to be aware of their surroundings and appreciative of the experiences offered along each mile of their trip.

Many travelers spend hours in their cars, time that might be used to interpret Parkway landscapes and help enrich the journey. With basic information, visitors could begin to read the roadside and appreciate the careful design that makes any trip not only different but memorable. Interpretation should help travelers to see and understand the relevance of the journey they are making.

That said, roadside stops also are an essential complement intended to entice exploration on foot, outside the vehicular cocoon. Even a short walk along a Parkway trail pulls visitors further into the past. Actual segments of the Old Trace retain a sense of isolation and adventure, accompanied by a heightened awareness of natural surroundings that surely intruded on the thoughts of Kaintucks on their long journey home. In other places, sacred mounds remind travelers that this is the homeland of complex societies that built enduring cultural legacies. Other Parkway environments serve as reminders that the Natchez Trace never disappeared. Remnants of expansive plantations, isolated homesteads, cultural/educational institutions, and town/city growth bridge the historical divide between

the heyday of the Old Trace and authorization and construction of the Parkway and administration by the NPS.

Discovering the travel corridor

Each of the stakeholder/partner workshops made a similar point: discovery should expand beyond the Parkway’s narrow boundary. The Parkway’s primary themes also address stories with essential components that are preserved and interpreted by others. In the tradition of quality interpretation, Parkway interpretive media and programming should act as a catalyst for wider exploration and discovery.

For those who are interested, the refuge that the Parkway provides should be connected to, perhaps balanced by, the corridor’s contemporary communities. Access to both past and present provides a more vibrant and holistic portrait of local culture. More practically, information about convenient services—food, lodging, fuel—also eases traveler concerns and allows them to travel worry free.

Directing discovery

Interpretation should enhance existing facilities to further encourage discovery and sensory immersion into the primary themes. Current facilities and in-place interpretive media (exhibits, film, wayside exhibits, publications) provide context for the many layers of history commemorated along the Parkway.

What workshop participants thought would be helpful was additional information designed to direct and facilitate discovery, coupled with additional opportunities to experience living expressions of corridor life and culture.

To meet these objectives, the NPS will use the LRIP process to review existing facilities and identify locations that will be:

- Staffed by the NPS, staffed by volunteers and trained partners, or unstaffed but interpreted using non-personal media (wayside exhibits, publications, digital programming, interpretive trails, etc.).
- Used to distribute additional information, perhaps via self-service kiosks, connecting the Parkway to adjacent communities.
- Used for regularly scheduled interpretive cultural demonstrations or performances.
- Used to provide educational opportunities for school and youth groups.
- Used to encourage access to portions of the Old Trace.
- Used to encourage appropriate outdoor recreational opportunities (hiking, walking, jogging, horseback riding, camping, etc.).

Discovering high quality

When Parkway audiences encounter interpretive media and programming, it is important that they discover the highest quality possible. New Parkway interpretation and community engagement will be models of best practices. Guidance on planning and producing high quality interpretive media is readily available from Harpers Ferry Center, see <http://www.nps.gov/hfc/products>. More general guidance on high quality interpretation is available online at: <http://www.nps.gov/idp/interp/101/FoundationsCurriculum.pdf>.

Given the scope of the Parkway and its many interpretive venues, achieving and sustaining high quality will be an on-going challenge that needs to be addressed strategically.

On the heels of successful installations of contextual interior and outdoor exhibits in several locations and a new film for the Parkway Visitor Center, the Parkway will continue efforts to upgrade exterior exhibits by replacing substandard fiberglass wayside panels and rehabilitating cast aluminum panels where they contribute to Parkway landscape interpretation.



There are sensory pleasures for those who take the time to explore the Parkway.
Credit: NPS/© Marc Muench

Engaging the senses

The Parkway was carefully designed to evoke an agrarian landscape and commemorate the diverse history and culture associated with the Old Trace. When travelers stop and exit their vehicles, that sense of the past should be reinforced and deepened by sensory interpretive opportunities linked to the Parkway's primary themes.

Interpretation also should provide opportunities to explore the natural world within the Parkway

boundaries and to experience aspects of regional cultures including music, crafts, and art. Cultural demonstrations can enliven the journey and remind visitors that the Old Trace/Parkway are not arrested in the past but play an important role in the present. Corridor communities can become vibrant, memorable enhancements to the contextual chapters of history offered by the Parkway, strengthening the link between past and present, between the Parkway and surrounding communities.

Existing Conditions

Traveler Information System

- The Traveler's Information Station (TIS) is broadcast on AM radio station 1610 at seven locations along the Parkway. Each recording is unique, and provides interpretive information about the local area and the Parkway in general.

MP 10.3 Emerald Mound

Emerald Mound is a Mississippian period mound that attracts visitors interested in American Indian history and culture. Interpretive services include:

Personal Services

- Informal interpretation when staff is available.

Non-personal Services

- Large routed sign visible from a vehicle in the parking lot (meets physical accessibility standards).
- Wayside exhibits (3) currently scheduled for replacement in 2016 (will meet programmatic and physical accessibility standards).
- Site bulletin available at the Mount Locust Contact Station, Parkway Visitor Center, and nps.gov/natr.
- Mississippi Mound Tour sign.

MP 15.5 Mount Locust

Mount Locust is the only historic building along the Parkway that visitors are able to enter. The site is gated and locked and only open to visitation when the site is



Mount Locust attracted foot-weary boatmen 200 years ago, and still attracts visitors today. Milepost 15.5
Credit: NPS/© Marc Muench

staffed. The current contact station and restrooms were rehabbed and re-opened in the summer of 2013. They meet current physical accessibility standards.

Because of staffing changes over the past three to five years, the number of staff on-site varies from year to year and season to season. There currently is one full-time, permanent employee at Mount Locust. The current Pathways program for student recruitment has created significant obstacles in recruiting and hiring qualified students. As a result, the Mount Locust operation lacked student employees from 2013-2015. Students are a significant local resource, providing both fresh inputs for the park staff as well as connections to the local communities and universities.

Issue: The home and grounds do not meet current physical accessibility standards.

Personal Services

- 1 permanent GS7/9 Interpreter.
- 1 Volunteer RV site. Volunteers typically on-site Jan.-May & Sept.-Dec.
- 1 Local volunteer. No routine or scheduled hours.
- 1 Seasonal GS-4 Park Guide. March-Sept. or Oct.-April.
- 1 GS-4 Pathways Student. 16-24 hours/week during the school year, full time during the summer and holidays.

- Informal interpretation/tours of the house when staffing allows.
- Formal programs to schools and organized groups when staffing allows both on-site and off-site.

Non-personal Services

- Wayside exhibit/vertical panel (2). Meet current physical accessibility standards.

Issue: Exhibit content and appearance are outdated.

- Small interpretive signs describe where historic structures or landscape features (brick kiln, grape arbor, Chamberlain family cemetery, etc.) may have been located.

Issue: Site lacks adequate waysides and interpretation of the grounds.

- Routed sign at enslaved person cemetery.

Issue: Sign does not meet current physical or programmatic accessibility standards.

- Television and DVD player with two movies available, The Natchez Trace: Highway of the Old Southwest and Traces Through Time.

Issue: Standing room for 3-5 people in a multi-use space that includes information and sales.

- Site bulletin available on-site, at the Parkway Visitor Center, and nps.gov/natr.

MP 41.5 Sunken Trace

The Sunken Trace is one of best preserved sections of Old Trace that is accessible to visitors. Visitors interested in both history and scenery are attracted to this site.

Issue: The trail into the Sunken Trace is not accessible. There is currently no segment of Sunken Trace anywhere on the Parkway that meets physical accessibility standards.

Non-personal Services

- Large routed sign visible from a vehicle in the parking lot. Meets physical accessibility standards.

MP 54.8 Rocky Springs

Rocky Springs is one of three campgrounds along the Parkway. In addition to the campground, there are self-guided trails that tell the story of the abandoned town of Rocky Springs. Visitors interested in history, nature, and recreation spend time at Rocky Springs. The campground does have accessible restrooms, and an accessible camp site. The picnic area also has accessible picnic tables.

Personal Services

- 1 Volunteer RV site. Volunteers at this site have been sporadic over the past one to five years.

Issue: Cell phone and satellite coverage is weak and inconsistent, limiting volunteer interest.

- Informal interpretation occurs when volunteers are available.

In addition to roving the campground and providing information to campers, volunteers open the contact station at the entrance to the site and are available to answer questions and hand out publications.

Non-personal Services

- Wayside exhibit/vertical panel (1) meets current physical accessibility standards.

Issue: Content and appearance are outdated.

- Small interpretive signs describe the town site as well as conditions while the site was active.

Issue: Signs do not meet programmatic or physical accessibility standards.

- Bulletin board in the campground provides general orientation information to Parkway visitors.

MP 102.4 Parkway Information Cabin

The Parkway Information Cabin was opened in the summer of 2009 as a visitor contact station. New exhibits that tell the American Indian story of the Parkway were installed in May of 2013. A district supervisor was hired in fall of 2014.

The Parkway Information Cabin was closed in 2013 due to a reduction of staff and the collapse of restroom pipes. After a two year closure, the cabin re-opened on a



Cypress Swamp represents one of many types of habitat found in the seven major ecoregions that the Parkway traverses. Milepost 122
Credit: NPS/© Marc Muench

part-time basis in January of 2016 with the help of volunteers.

Issue: The trailer restrooms are temporary. A permanent solution is being discussed.

Personal Services

- 1 permanent GS-11 Interpreter.
- 1 Volunteer RV Site
- Interest from local volunteers has been low to moderate. A few very interested local volunteers are available to cover 75% of the current advertised hours.
- Both on- and off-site programs for schools and organized groups are offered when staffing allows.

Non-personal Services

- Interior visitor center exhibits provide orientation to the Parkway and help tell the

American Indian story of the Natchez Trace. Exhibits meet current programmatic and physical accessibility standards.

- Wayside exhibit/vertical panels (2) meet current physical accessibility standards.

Issue: Content and appearance of the panels are outdated.

- Bulletin board provides general orientation information to Parkway visitors.

MP 122.0 Cypress Swamp

Cypress Swamp is a half-mile trail that takes visitors through a water tupelo/cypress swamp. Visitors interested in natural history and scenery are attracted to this site.

Issue: This trail does not meet physical accessibility standards.

Non-personal Services

- Large, routed sign visible from a vehicle in the parking lot meets physical accessibility standards.
- Small interpretive signs discuss the natural history of the site.

Issue: Signs do not meet current physical or programmatic accessibility standards.

MP 193.1 Jeff Busby

This is an 18-site campground with an adjacent picnic area and a short nature trail and exhibit shelter. There are many repeat campers to this area. Restroom in picnic area is closed. Restrooms at top of Little Mountain are closed and will be removed.

Personal Services

- One volunteer pad with complete hook-ups.

Issue: Because the campground is isolated, there are challenges to volunteer recruitment and retention.

Non-personal Services

- Large, routed wood sign explains Jeff Busby's role in establishing the Parkway.

Issue: The title "Jeff Busby Park" confuses some visitors.

- Large interpretive panels in exhibit shelter explain succession

in hardwood forests, history, and "The Indian Hunter."

Issue: The interpretive content is outdated; waysides should be removed or replaced.

- Little Mountain Nature Trail with a routed wood sign at the trailhead.

Issue: Interpretive signs on the trail are outdated and do not meet accessibility standards.

MP 232.4 Bynum Mounds

This site has six Woodland period mounds. A circular sidewalk leads past the two visible mounds and through a small exhibit shelter. A restroom and picnic area are one-half mile north on the Parkway.

Issue: Occasional misuse by visitors includes using the mounds for ATV activity.

Personal Services

Issue: Although there is high interest in local schools for field trips to this site, availability of staff limits the number of scheduled field trips.

Non-personal Services

- Five new interpretive panels for the exhibit shelter are being developed. They focus on Woodland period life and the importance of the mounds to current American Indians.



Horseback riders enjoy riding on the site that was once occupied by a large village of Chickasaw people. Credit: NPS/© Marc Muench

MP 251.1 Chickasaw Council House

This is a pull-off and small picnic area.

Non-personal Services

Currently a routed wood sign explains the Treaty of Pontotoc Creek. A new wayside exhibit focusing on the importance of the Treaty of Pontotoc Creek currently is under development with installation in 2016.

Issue: Site will have to be physically modified to provide accessibility to the new wayside.

MP 261.8 Chickasaw Village Site

This approximately 100-acre area was the largest Chickasaw village site prior to the Indian Removal. It is still a site important to modern

Chickasaw. It also is a significant remnant of the Black Belt Prairie. A segment of the Natchez Trace National Scenic Trail runs through the site. The Chickasaw Nation is pursuing additional interpretive opportunities in the area; Natchez Trace Parkway staff will continue to work with the Chickasaw in support of mutual interpretive goals.

Issue: Occasional misuse by visitors includes ATV activity, dogs off leash, and other inappropriate activities.

Personal Services

- Education programs and occasional ranger-led walks take place in this area. In the past, this site has been used for informal interpretation.

Non-personal Services

- The six-mile Blackland Prairie Section of the Natchez Trace National Scenic Trail passes through the site. A few small signs identify trees.

Issue: These trail signs are in poor condition. Directional signs are not clear.

- Little Boy Nature Trail is a short nature trail.

Issue: This trail has several outdated and inaccurate small signs supposedly describing the activities of a historical, young Chickasaw boy.

- There is an exhibit shelter with interpretive audio and several interpretive panels. New interpretive panels are currently undergoing development with installation planned for 2016.
- Landscape features mark the sites of one summer, two winter, and one large structure (fort or council house).

Issue: The interpretive signs are outdated and are not accessible. Pending compliance, the park might consider removing or replacing them.

MP 266.0 Parkway Visitor Center

Located mid-way on the Parkway, just north of Tupelo, Mississippi, the Parkway Visitor Center is the main visitor center for the Natchez Trace Parkway. There is parking

for autos (35 spaces), RV pull-through parking (15 spaces), and handicapped parking (2 spaces). The park headquarters is in the rear section of the building.

Issue: Restrooms only partially meet accessibility standards.

The doors are heavy and not automated, signs are high and do not have tactile characters, soap and paper towel dispensers are not in the proper positions.

Issue: There are no accessible picnic tables.

Across the Parkway from the building, there is the trailhead for the NATT, an outdoor educational area, a bicycle camp, and a picnic area.

Personal Services

As headquarters of the Natchez Trace Parkway, this location has the greatest number of interpretive staff: Chief of Interpretation; three GS 7/9 interpreters; one 4/5 STF; one fulltime Park Guide; and as budget allows, one or more GS 4 seasonal Park Guide(s); and one or more GS 4 student(s).

- The visitor contact desk is staffed by one interpretive ranger at a time; 8 am-5 pm.
- An Eastern National bookstore has one part-time employee.
- An auditorium seats 50.
- Educational programs and special events, including guest speakers and celebratory events, are held at this facility. Because of the limited size of the indoor space,

most events are held outdoors.

- Volunteers offer historic demonstrations twice a month.
- Staff members offer Junior Ranger programs throughout the year.

Non-Personal Services

- Exhibit panels, developed in 2005, interpret the Parkway's chronology.

Issue: The Gobo light display that points out special areas on a floor map frequently malfunctions; intermittent fixes have worked for varying lengths of time.

- Interactive audio displays.
- A hands-on display and "touch me please" box contains antlers, shells, etc.
- A 15-minute interpretive/orientation film, completed in 2014, is shown in the auditorium. The film is open-captioned, and has interpretive audio and assistive listening devices.
- There is one RV pad with full hook-up for a 32-hour volunteer.

Issue: The Parkway is actively recruiting volunteers.

Beech Springs Nature Trail

This is a short (approximately 1/8-mile), paved loop trail.

Issue: This trail may not meet current accessibility standards.

Personal Services

- Staff members frequently use this trail for educational programs and sometimes for ranger-led walks (Night Walks, for example).

Non-personal Services:

- Signs indicating tree species.

Issue: While most of these signs are new, one is incorrect and should be replaced.

- Small metal interpretive signs focus on natural history.

Beech Springs Outdoor Classroom

An amphitheater seats 100. There are three pavilions with picnic tables, water, a sink, portable outhouse, grates, and benches. This facility doubles as a bicycle-only campground. It is located at the end of a short (approximately 300-foot) gravel trail and the lower level is accessible by vehicle on a gated dirt road. There is a pad for a fourth pavilion.

Issue: There is no accessible outhouse.

Personal Services

- This area is sometimes used for educational and campfire programs.

Visitors look across the Tennessee River toward the location of George Colbert's ferry landing, Milepost 328.7
Credit: NPS/© Marc Muench



MP 269.4 Confederate Gravesites and Old Trace

This is a short, paved (non-accessible) trail that leads to a section of the Old Trace and 13 Civil War-era graves.

Non-personal Services

- A large, routed wood sign interprets both the Old Trace and the gravesites.

Issue: The arrowhead “historic site” marker along the Parkway states only “Old Trace.” Visitors looking for the Confederate graves frequently bypass the site.

- An interpretive panel about the 13 unknown Confederates is located at the site of the graves.

Issue: The interpretive panel is faded and warped.

Issue: Visitors leave abandoned property of all kinds, including Confederate and American flags, trinkets, coins, and other small items.

MP 286.7 Pharr Mounds

This approximately 90-acre site is the largest mound site on the Natchez Trace Parkway. There are eight Woodland period mounds that can be viewed at a distance from a pavilion. New restrooms meet current accessibility standards.

Personal Services

- In the past, this site has been used for informal and ranger-led talks.

Issue: Reduced staffing levels make it difficult to provide personal services on-site.

Non-personal Services

- A large vertical, wood routed sign interprets the mounds. New interpretive panels are currently under development for this site.

MP 327.3 Colbert Ferry

This facility has four separate areas: a contact station and restrooms rebuilt in 2014, a bicycle-only camp, a large boat landing area, and a picnic ground. The boat landing is very popular, and sometimes used as a base for regional bass fishing tournaments on the Tennessee River.

Issue: Because of reduced staffing and supervisory capacity to recruit, train, and oversee volunteers, this contact station has been closed since 2009.

Non-personal Services

- Vertical, wood routed sign interprets the site.
- New interpretive wayside panels are being developed for this site.

Issue: Although plans for the contact station included interpretive panels on both breezeway walls, only one wall is available for panels. No breezeway panels are currently under development.

Colbert Home and Ferry

- New interpretive panels are under development.

Issue: Currently, there is an outdated wayside audio box with a missing interpretive image that is scheduled for removal.

Boat Dock Area

There are restrooms, built in 2013, that meet current accessibility standards, a bulletin board, and picnic area.

- The North Alabama Birding Trail (site #12) has interpretive panels provided by the trail.

MP 330.2 Rock Spring

This is a non-paved nature trail and site #10 on the North Alabama Birding Trail. The trail crosses a stream with rock steps, runs along a beaver pond, up a fairly steep hill, and back down to the stream crossing. It is an approximately quarter-mile loop. There is a picnic table at the parking area.

Non-personal Services

- A large, routed wood sign at parking area meets current accessibility standards.
- There is a smaller routed wood sign at trailhead.
- Several small, black metal pedestal signs interpret natural history.
- A North Alabama Birding wayside interprets hummingbird migration.

MP 375.8 Old Trace Drive

This is a 3-mile, slow-speed, 1-way driving loop that takes visitors up on the ridge off the main Parkway drive. It provides somewhat of a wilderness experience for people who cannot walk distances, and an easy, but intimate backcountry experience for anyone.

Non-personal Services

- There is an exhibit shelter at the beginning of the loop.

Issue: The interpretive panels are outdated in appearance, faded, and difficult to read.

MP 385.9 Meriwether Lewis

This site has a two-room visitor contact station, campground with 32 sites, picnic area, cemetery, and short interpretive trail.

Personal Services

- In one room of the contact station staff provide visitor information and operate an Eastern National sales area.

Issue: It is very difficult to staff this location because of the lack of housing.

- Because of budget limitations, this site is staffed intermittently.
- Programs and events are held at this location, but rarely.
- Sometimes there is a volunteer campground host.

Non-personal Services

- The contact station also has one room with interpretive exhibits, installed in 2012.
- A site bulletin is available on site, at the Parkway Visitor Center, and www.nps.gov/natr.
- There is a bulletin board at the campground restroom.

Meriwether Lewis Burial Site

This is the site of the “broken shaft” monument that marks the location of Capt. Lewis’s burial. A “pioneer cemetery” surrounds the burial monument. This area contains the graves of many local ancestors and is a source of pride and nostalgia to local residents.

Non-personal Services

- There are three historic, cast aluminum War Department era signs at the site.

Interpretive Trail

There is a paved trail with interpretive exhibits installed in 2011. The paved section of the trail stops at a protected section of the Old Trace. The Old Trace section leads to Grinder’s Stand and the contact station. The paved portion of this trail meets accessibility standards.

Non-personal Services

- The interpretive exhibits include both cutout figures

and interpretive text. The initial Corten steel figures were replaced with painted aluminum figures in 2013 due to structural defectiveness in the Corten exhibits.

Issue: The trail is a conglomerate of gravel and polymer adhesive. The polymer is sometimes unstable and bubbles through the gravel.

Issue: Although installed in 2011, some interpretive panels are peeling.

MP 391.9 Fall Hollow

There is a paved trail that leads to an overlook view of a waterfall. There are two unmaintained trails that lead to the lower waterfalls. There are multiple social trails near the falls.

Issue: Unmaintained trails continue beyond the maintained trail to the base of the falls. These trails can be difficult to navigate.



Jackson Falls is a favorite stopping point for both repeat and first time visitors. Milepost 404.7
Credit: NPS/© Marc Muench

MP 401.4 Tobacco Farm Old Trace Drive

This is a working exhibit representing a tobacco farm. A local farmer plants, harvests, and then hangs a small plot of tobacco in the historic barn. There is a 2-mile, 1-way drive on a partially paved road.

Non-personal Services

- A large, wood routed sign interprets the site.

Issue: The sign inaccurately states there is a 10-minute loop walk.

- A small metal sign explains the origin of the site.
- There are two fiberglass interpretive panels, one outside and another inside the barn. Audio stations accompany the signs.

Issue: The exterior interpretive panel is in poor condition.

Issue: The exterior audio station is unreliable.

Old Trace Drive

Issue: The drive is only partly paved. This may be an issue for cyclists, motorcyclists, or some cars, especially in inclement weather. This could be noted on the Parkway map.

MP 404.7 Jackson Falls

This is a short walk, on a steep paved walkway, to a double waterfall. The opposite direction leads to a view of the Duck River.

Non-personal Services

- There is a large, routed wood sign.
- A fiberglass interpretive panel adds additional interpretation.

Issue: This interpretive panel is in poor condition.

MP 407.7 Gordon House Historic Site

Built in 1818, the Gordon House is one of two existing historic structures from the heyday of the Old Trace. The house is not open to the public, but visitors often try to look in through the windows. There also is a gentle, but non-accessible, trail that leads to the old ferry site on the Duck River. There are restrooms, picnic tables, and bulletin boards.

Issue: The trail past the house is not accessible.

Non-personal Services

- A site bulletin is available at the Parkway Visitor Center and www.nps.gov/natr.

Issue: Because of reduced staffing levels, the map/bulletin dispenser is frequently empty.

- There is a large, routed wood sign.
- There is a fiberglass interpretive panel facing the house, on the trail, and at the ferry site.

Issue: These interpretive panels are in poor condition.



The Double Arch Bridge over Tennessee Highway 96 won the 1995 Presidential Award for Design Excellence. Milepost 438

MP 438.0 Birdsong Hollow

This is the location of the award-winning Double Arch Bridge, rising 155 feet above Birdsong Hollow/TN Highway 96. There is access to TN Highway 96, an important entrance to the Parkway, and signs at both the northern end and the base of the bridge.

Non-personal Services

- Both the northern terminus and the HWY 96 entrance have a bulletin board and an interpretive panel.

Issue: Because of reduced staffing, the map dispenser is frequently empty.

Issue: Bulletin boards fade due to the angle of installation.

Issue: Interpretive panels are in poor condition.

Issue: Although the bridge was not designed for pedestrians, visitors frequently walk on the bridge to take in the view.

Staffing

Volunteers and partners play important roles in helping the Parkway meet its interpretive goals. However, since the potential for expanding volunteer opportunities is not equally distributed along the Parkway, staff will recruit strategically in those locations and for specific duties that are most likely to have positive results. The Action Plan portion of this LRIP will identify recommendations that might benefit from volunteer and partner involvement.

Partners and Their Missions

Formal Partnerships

Natchez Trace Parkway Association

The Natchez Trace Parkway Association works closely with the National Park Service to encourage people to explore, complete, support, and protect the Parkway. The Association is a non-profit organization chartered in the state of Mississippi and registered in the states of Alabama and Tennessee. The Association was founded in 1934 to mobilize the effort to create the Natchez Trace Parkway. Completion of the Parkway road in 2005 achieved a major goal. Today the Association is focused on visitor amenities, interpretation, and programming. Current projects include: development of Healthy Parks, Healthy People initiative with Vanderbilt University, a living history program to use the

important history of the Natchez Trace to teach younger generations, support for trail maintenance, increased bicycling outreach and safety, and the development of cell phone tours.

Natcheztrace.org

Natchez Trace Compact

In an ambitious effort to promote visitation to the communities located on either side of the historic route, the Natchez Trace Compact, Inc. was formed in 1999. The group's primary objective is to attract more visitors to travel the Parkway and take the time to explore all there is to see and do along the way.

The organization has identified target markets for an advertising program which include consumers,

Former superintendent Cam Sholly, and then Natchez Trace Parkway Association President, Tony Turnbow, pose with War of 1812 reenactors at the Gordon House. Milepost 407.7
Credit: NPS



group tours, and special interest areas. The group has developed complete marketing, public relations, and itineraries, which are grouped geographically with the ability to link, enabling the visitor to travel the full length of the Parkway with exciting “not to miss” recommendations. Niche areas include those interested in RVing, motorcycling, and bicycling.

Scenictrace.com

Eastern National

Eastern National is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit cooperating association that supports the interpretive, educational, and scientific programs and services of the National Park Service and other public trust partners. Founded in 1947 by National Park Service rangers, Eastern National’s vision was to serve as a shared-resource retail and educational network for America’s special historical, cultural, and natural places — helping to support the interpretive and educational programs of partners.

easternnational.org

Mississippi Hills Heritage Area

The Mississippi Hills National Heritage Area (MHNHA) was designated by Congress and the president in April of 2009. Bounded approximately by Interstate 55 to the west and Highway 14 to the south, MHNHA covers 19 full counties and portions of 11 others in northeastern Mississippi.

MHNHA represents a distinctive cultural landscape shaped largely by the dynamic intersection of Appalachian and Delta cultures, an intersection that produced a powerful concentration of nationally-significant cultural icons. Lasting contributions to our country’s musical and literary legacies were forged by Hills natives Elvis Presley, William Faulkner, Tennessee Williams, Howlin’ Wolf, Jerry Lee Lewis, John Grisham, and Tammy Wynette.

mississippihills.org

Muscle Shoals National Heritage Area

The Muscle Shoals National Heritage Area (MSNHA), hosted by the University of North Alabama with offices in Florence, Alabama, was officially designated by Congress in 2009. The MSNHA spans the six counties of north Alabama’s Tennessee River water basin.

The mission of the Muscle Shoals National Heritage Area (MSNHA) is to promote cultural tourism by education, preservation, and conservation of the heritage and culture of the six counties within the designated area. MSNHA seeks to inform, educate, develop, and interpret visitor-ready sites, create living history experiences, and chronicle the evolution of the area’s landscape as well as extend these opportunities to the largest audience possible.

msnha@una.edu

Mississippi's Final Stands Interpretive Center

The Mississippi's Final Stands Civil War board operates an interpretive center and the Brices Crossroads National Battlefield Commission manages the battlefields. The 4,000 sq. ft. center and outdoor exhibits interpret the Battle of Brice's Crossroads fought June 10, 1864 and the Battle of Tupelo/Harrisburg/Old Town Creek fought July 13-15, 1864.

finalstands.com

Chickasaw Nation (Sulphur, OK)

The Chickasaw Nation is economically strong, culturally vibrant, and full of energetic people dedicated to the preservation of family, community, and heritage. The Chickasaw Nation continues to make a special effort to educate Chickasaws and others about

the homelands of the Chickasaw people. They stress that the Chickasaw presence in their ancestral homelands did not end with the 1837 removal of our people to Indian Territory in 1837, as they still have a deep connection with the areas of Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee, and Kentucky.

www.chickasaw.net

Southeastern Oklahoma State University (Durant, OK)

Southeastern Oklahoma State University provides an environment of academic excellence that enables students to reach their highest potential. Southeastern has been recognized nationally for its Native American programs. They plan to grow and expand their Native American programs in the future with the Native American Institute as a key component. They work

In partnership with the Parkway, students from the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians produced a video about Choctaw social dances. Credit: Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians



closely with the staff members of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma.

www.se.edu

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma

www.choctawnation.com

Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians

The Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians is the only federally recognized American Indian tribe living in Mississippi. The Choctaw Indian Reservation consists of 35,000 acres of trust land scattered over 10 counties in east central Mississippi. The Cultural Affairs Program exists to strengthen cultural knowledge among the Choctaw people and to increase public awareness of the tribe's history and culture.

www.choctaw.org

Informal Partners

Mississippi Craft Center
The mission of the Craftsmen's Guild of Mississippi, Inc. is to preserve, promote, market, educate, and encourage excellence in regional crafts, believing that regular contact with the skilled work of the hand enhances the lives of producers and patrons.

craftsmensguildofms.org

The Mississippi Department of Archives and History (MDAH)

MDAH was founded in 1902. A comprehensive historical agency, the department collects, preserves, and provides access to the archival resources of the state, administers museums and historic sites, and oversees statewide programs for historic preservation, government records management, and publications.

mdah.state.ms.us

Natchez National Historical Park

Natchez National Historical Park commemorates the history of Natchez, Mississippi, and is managed by the National Park Service. The park consists of three distinct parts. Fort Rosalie is the site of a fortification from the 18th century, built by the French, and later controlled by Great Britain, Spain, and the US. The William Johnson House is the home of William Johnson, a free African American barber and resident of Natchez whose diary

has been published. Melrose is the estate of John T. McMurren, a lawyer and state senator who was a planter in Natchez from 1830 until the Civil War.

nps.gov/natc

Natchez-Adams School District

The Natchez-Adams School District is a public school district based in Natchez, Mississippi. The district's boundaries parallel that of Adams County. There were a total of 4,305 students enrolled in the Natchez-Adams School District during the 2006-2007 school year.

natchez.k12.ms.us

Tupelo Public School District

The Tupelo Public School District is a public school district based in Tupelo, Mississippi. There were a total of 7,099 students enrolled in the Tupelo Public School District during the 2015-2016 school year.

tupeloschools.com

Others

University of North Alabama
Mississippi State University
University of Mississippi
Tishomingo State Park
Bay Springs Lake (US Army Corps
of Engineers)
Mississippi Children's Museum
Shiloh National Battlefield
Tupelo Convention and Visitors
Bureau
Collinwood Chamber of
Commerce
Wayne County Welcome Center
Hohenwald Chamber of Commerce
Lewis County Museum of Natural
History & Hohenwald Discovery
Center
Kosciusko Welcome Center
Clinton Visitor Center
Adventure Cycling Association
Natchez Visitor Center
Leipers Fork Welcome Center
Florence Welcome Center
Vicksburg National Military Park
Several other public school districts
along the Parkway

Interpretive Issues & NPS Initiatives

Issues

To develop the most effective interpretive programs and media, Parkway staff must address issues that are closely linked to various desired audience experiences. At NATR/NATT, those issues (in no particular order) include the need to:

Establish NPS identity

Many residents and some visitors do not know that the Parkway is a unit of the National Park System. It is important that all users understand that specific rules and regulations accompany the NPS mandate and influence both the appearance and administration of the Parkway. In particular, the Parkway remains focused on sustaining the high quality of design evident in each aspect of development including interpretive media and programming.

What the Old Trace was and the Parkway is

The Old Trace and the Parkway are not the same. While they intersect at places, they are just as likely to have separate identities. Many visitors arrive without understanding how the Old Trace and the Parkway are related yet separate.

Historically, the Old Trace was a network of trails rather than a single path. Some describe that network as braided with multiple strands that were sometimes parallel and sometimes intersecting. Like a mature river, the Trace shifted course over time.

The Parkway commemorates the Old Trace but does not necessarily follow precisely the same path. Engineered for automobiles, the Parkway is a modern roadway that flows through a carefully designed, evocative landscape providing access to the natural and cultural resources associated with travel along the Old Trace.

As the 21st century progresses and development occurs just outside Parkway boundaries, one of the Parkway's original goals--preservation of agrarian landscapes--will take on increased importance.



The Parkway is a popular cycling destination. The Parkway is actively investigating ways to minimize bicycle-vehicle conflicts. Credit: NPS/© Marc Muench

Conflicts among user groups

The Parkway is frequently used by commuters, especially near urban areas such as Ridgeland and Tupelo, Mississippi. Commuters are more likely to be traveling at faster speeds and tend to drive more aggressively than recreational motorists. High volumes of commuter traffic degrade the visitor experience on the Parkway and exacerbate the potential for user-group conflicts.

The Parkway's narrow lanes are integral to the designed landscape and to a pleasurable driving experience. Bicycling is becoming more popular on the Parkway and now vehicles and bicycles are increasingly coming into conflict, creating safety concerns and raising the risk for accidents and injuries particularly involving local drivers. Bicyclist fatalities have occurred along the Parkway for a variety of reasons

including distracted driving. User conflicts in the Tupelo and Ridgeland/Jackson areas are primarily the result of heavy commuter traffic on the already narrow roadway.

Orientation

Given the linear nature of the Parkway and the reality that travelers can enter at many locations, visitor orientation is a primary concern. There are many questions related to planning enhanced orientation. For example, how and where will travelers get information that will help them plan their visit? What role will specific facilities play in orientation and how can Parkway staff make effective use of digital and social media? Do the north and south Parkway entrances need a different or more robust approach to orientation? What information is essential and which delivery

media would be the most effective?
Can trailheads and intersections between the Parkway and the Natchez Trace National Scenic Trail (NATT) be more effective?

The future of youth programming

In today's evolving educational climate, an LRIP needs to identify the components of an effective program of outreach to educators and youth.

Partner and community roles

The Parkway has built a dedicated core of partners including local communities. What are the concrete roles that partners can play in achieving the interpretive goals in this LRIP? How can existing partnerships be nurtured?

Erosion

Portions of the Old Trace offer concrete examples of how human use and development affect the natural environment, particularly where the path runs through loess soil and takes on a characteristic sunken appearance. Along these portions of the Old Trace, erosion continues, toppling trees, triggering slides, and requiring continual maintenance to keep trails open and safe.

Digital and Social Media

As digital and social media evolve, new ideas for interpretive applications continually surface. Every LRIP must assess how to use these new tools in appropriate, sustainable, and cost effective ways.

Accessibility

The NPS is committed to developing a comprehensive strategy to provide people with disabilities equal access to all programs, activities, services, and facilities. As part of that effort, Harpers Ferry Center developed "Programmatic Accessibility Guidelines for National Park Service Interpretive Media," and made them and other resources available. See www.nps.gov/hfc/accessibility/index.htm.

Staff, partners, and media contractors must consult these guidelines as the Parkway revises or rehabilitates existing interpretive programming, and develops new interpretive media. As the interpretive planning process progresses, discussions of certain venues--Mount Locust and portions of the Sunken Trace in particular--must explore solutions that provide enhanced audience access.

Initiatives

Foundation Document

Completed in October 2014, the Foundation Document is a formal statement of the Parkway's core mission and provides a basic understanding of the park's purpose, significance, and fundamental resources and values. It serves as the basis for park management decisions and answers critical questions such as what are the park's legal and policy requirements, special mandates, and key planning and data needs.

NPS Centennial (2016)

In 2016, the nation is celebrating the 100th anniversary of the National Park Service, a defining moment that offers an opportunity to take strategic action to prepare for the next 100 years. At this critical time, the NPS seeks to recommit to the preservation of these special places, invest wisely in the system's most important assets, use the parks to enhance informal learning, engage volunteers, provide training opportunities to youth, and enhance the NPS' ability to leverage partnerships to accomplish its mission.

Find Your Park

In celebration of the National Park Service Centennial, the National Park Foundation and the National Park Service initiated the Find Your Park movement to inspire all people to connect with, enjoy, and support America's national parks.

Every Kid in a Park

The NPS has embraced this White House initiative. Through Every Kid in a Park, the NPS hopes to engage and create the next generation of park visitors, supporters, and advocates. The immediate goal is to provide an opportunity for each and every 4th-grade student across the country to experience their federal public lands and waters in person throughout the 2015-2016 school year.

A Call to Action

A Call to Action (2011) remains the foundation for 2016 centennial preparations. It is the National Park Service's blueprint for the future,

outlining the innovative work the agency hopes to accomplish.

A Call to Action draws from three major initiatives—America's Great Outdoors: A Promise to Future Generations (2011); the National Parks Second Century Commission Report, Advancing the National Park Idea (2009); and The Future of America's National Parks (the Centennial Report, 2007).

Call to Action charts a path toward a second-century vision by asking employees and partners to commit to concrete actions that advance the mission of the NPS in four areas.

1. Connect people to parks and help communities protect what is special to them, highlight their history, and retain or rebuild their economic and environmental sustainability.
2. Advance the education mission by strengthening the NPS role as an educational force based on core American values, historical and scientific scholarship, and unbiased translation of the complexities of the American experience.
3. Preserve America's special places and take the lead in extending the benefits of conservation across physical, social, political, and international boundaries in partnership with others.
4. Enhance professional and organizational excellence by adapting to the changing needs of visitors, communities, and partners; encouraging organizational innovation; and giving employees the chance to reach their full potential.

Interpretive Goals

The LRIP is a 5-year document that serves several purposes. It provides a tool for focusing and assessing existing interpretation even as it makes recommendations designed to strengthen or perhaps redirect a park's interpretive efforts. It endorses past success and charts a desired future.

The Parkway staff will implement as many of these recommendations as possible, given existing staffing and budget levels, in the next five years.

Since staff and budget always have limits, it is important to focus on the Parkway's most pressing interpretive needs. Sensitive to that reality, Parkway staff, at the conclusion of the Stakeholder Workshops, reviewed each section in Part 1 of the draft plan and decided that the NATR LRIP should focus new interpretive efforts on recommendations that:

Design a set of actions that will enhance the safety of bicyclists using the Parkway.

Design a plan to update the Parkway's out-of-date wayside exhibits and those that are inaccurate or that no longer contribute to Parkway landscapes. Rehabilitate cast aluminum panels and routed wood panels that remain critical to Parkway interpretation. Develop a strategy to address the anodized panels that do not meet accessibility standards.

Develop media that will enrich the journey along the Parkway by helping travelers appreciate and understand the variety of the Parkway's landscapes. Develop a plan to use digital and social media for orientation and interpretation in effective and sustainable ways.

A tree at the Mount Locust site is mimicked by the design of the split rail fence, and invites interpretation. Milepost 15.5
Credit: NPS/© Marc Muench



Develop new partnerships and strengthen existing partnerships to assist with orientation and interpretation, specifically living history, cultural demonstrations, and digital/social media.

Develop new relationships with interested educators and youth groups.

Design a set of actions that will identify and enhance a number of interpretive hubs. Specifically:

For Mount Locust/Milepost 15.5

Develop a strategy to make treatment of the Parkway's primary themes more inclusive, particularly in the areas of chattel slavery and its associated plantation economy, the built and cultural environments (including building and landscape preservation) located in the travel corridor, and the importance of Natchez to Old Trace history.

Develop a strategy to enliven the Mount Locust grounds with theme-related events, demonstrations, community engagement activities, commemorations, and remembrances.

Develop a strategy to help visitors visualize the appearance of Mount Locust, not just the house but the whole property, during both the Old Trace heyday and as an antebellum cotton plantation.

Develop a strategy to strengthen ties with the Natchez-Adams School District and explore ways to use the Parkway to supplement and enrich their educational programming.

For Parkway Information Cabin/Milepost 102.4

Develop a strategy to use the cabin's interior for orientation to both on- and off-Parkway attractions and services including collaboration with local convention and visitors bureaus to ensure that visitor information is up-to-date.

Explore strategies to recruit volunteers and partners to assist with cabin operations, guided programs, and/or other special events, commemorations, etc.

Develop a strategy to bring the cabin complex to life and make it a more inviting stop. Possibilities include music, craft demonstrations, walks on the multi-use trail, living history, and appropriate theme-related community events.

Develop a strategy to work with the Mississippi Craft Center on interpretive and public programming.

Develop a plan for sustained collaboration with the Mississippi Department of Archives and History (MDAH) designed to link MDAH interpretation of the Old Trace and Parkway programming with NPS goals.

For Parkway Visitor Center Milepost 266.0

Develop a schedule for limited, flexible space inside the visitor center for changing exhibits on specific topics related to local involvement in Parkway history such as the DAR or other topics suggested by the local community. The role of woman and the influence of the Old Trace/Parkway on creativity and the arts were also suggested during a Stakeholder Workshop.

Design a strategy to provide additional self-service information about services (lodging, food, gas) and attractions available off the Parkway in local communities that were historically part of the Old Trace travel corridor.

Design a strategy to increase use of the natural area by formal and informal groups. Offer more natural and environmental interpretation as well as more fitness activities--hiking/jogging/fitness activities.

Expand use of the visitor center for special events that will focus on aspects of the Parkway's themes and attract new audiences. Build new relationships with local groups and organizations to plan, organize, promote, and present events, performances, and cultural demonstrations.

Explore the need for materials for international audiences. Decisions need to be data driven.

Build new partnerships with specific user groups (local clubs, recreation groups, bicycle groups, scout and other youth groups,

re-enactors, and church groups) who might form partnerships with the NPS to provide interpretive feedback, develop interpretive programming, or help distribute information.

For Meriwether Lewis/Milepost 385.9

Develop a system to dispense orientation and additional visitor information not only for the Parkway but for communities within the Old Trace corridor. Since local convention and visitors bureaus are established to gather and maintain information on local services, they are ideal and willing sources for up-to-date information.

Develop a program of outreach to local residents that will reconnect them with the site and encourage interest and use.

Explore strategies to recruit and train willing partners and volunteers, including the Natchez Trace Parkway Association, to assist on site via staff for the cabin, guided programs, and special events (commemorations, living history, cultural demonstrations and performances)

Enlist the assistance of the Natchez Trace Compact to use social media for orientation and interpretive purposes.

For additional sites with high interpretive potential. Specifically:

North and South Entrances to the Parkway

Develop a strategy to provide more effective orientation to the Parkway and to link the history of the Old Trace to the importance of Nashville and Natchez.

Rocky Springs/Milepost 54.8

Develop a strategy to deliver visiting information about the Parkway and the travel corridor.

Develop media that will encourage visitors to discover the many facets of Rocky Springs, including the recreational facilities (camping and trails) to the village site and cemetery.

Jeff Busby/Milepost 193.1

Develop a strategy to replace substandard interpretive panels with new media that focus on the Parkway's primary theme "Inspiration and Preservation."

Chickasaw Village/Milepost 261.8

Develop a program to sustain and extend outreach to the Chickasaw that makes them a partner in on-going interpretation of the site and the Chickasaw homeland. Work with the Chickasaw to host appropriate on-site activities that bring the site to life. Parkway staff will work with the Chickasaw Nation as new interpretive opportunities develop.

Colbert Ferry/Milepost 327.3

Develop a strategy to deliver visiting information about both the Parkway and the travel corridor to the site's many users.

Develop media that will encourage visitors to discover the many facets of Colbert Ferry including the recreational facilities as well as the ferry and stand sites.

Gordon House/Milepost 407.7

Develop a strategy to help visitors visualize the appearance of the house and plantation during the Old Trace heyday.

Tupelo and Brices Cross Roads Battlefields

Develop a strategy to sustain and enhance collaboration with Mississippi's Final Stands Interpretive Center in ways that will place the NPS battlefield sites into larger context.

Develop a strategy to replace out-of-date interpretive panels at both sites.

A scenic landscape photograph showing a lush green valley with rolling hills. In the foreground, there are dense green trees and foliage. The middle ground features a wide, open green field with some small structures or trees scattered across it. The background shows a range of hills or mountains partially shrouded in a light mist or fog. The sky is a clear, pale blue. The entire scene is framed by the dark, leafy branches of trees in the foreground, creating a natural frame effect.

Part 2 Action Plan

Introduction

Part 2 of the LRIP describes the actions that Parkway staff and partners will take to build on *The Foundation*, described in Part 1, during the next five years.

A Dynamic Document

LRIPs are dynamic documents that respond to changing conditions. Staff should revisit this plan annually and make adjustments, remove accomplished tasks, and include new projects that have surfaced. Since viable plans need to be nimble and responsive to changing conditions, staff should take advantage of new opportunities as they arise. No plan can foresee every eventuality.

However, as conditions change, this LRIP provides a framework for considering interpretive proposals as they emerge. Part 1 should function as a gauge against which new ideas are measured. Does a new idea reach targeted audiences, address an identified issue, offer a desired audience experience, etc.? When properly used, Part 1 provides priorities that can help move interpretive programming in a consistent direction despite changing times.

Organization of Part 2

Although the themes, audiences, audience experiences, and issues described in Part 1 suggest many ways to focus interpretive programming for the next five years, Part 2 is organized to reflect the priorities identified by Parkway staff after the Stakeholder Workshops. Those priorities are described in the Interpretive Goals section of Part 1. Those goals provided focus for the development of action items.

Implementation charts near the end of this document provide a visual reference for the recommendations. Those charts suggest three phases: immediate projects for year one; projects for years two and three; and projects for years four and five.

Notations on Funding and Staffing

Some of the bulleted items are dependent on funding not in hand, while others require additional staff or partner participation. Those actions are noted in the implementation chart.

The Parkway experience extends beyond its boundaries, as shown by this view from the Baker Bluff Overlook.
Milepost 405.1
Credit: NPS/© Marc Muench

Proposed Actions

During a workshop held in Tupelo in August 2015, staff and partners identified the action items that follow. Each item is based in the goals and desired futures presented in Part 1 the LRIP.

Recommendations for Hubs

Since four “hubs” will play a critical role in providing both orientation and interpretation to Parkway visitors, workshop participants considered how to enhance the facilities located at Mount Locust, the Parkway Information Cabin, the Natchez Trace Parkway Visitor Center, and the Meriwether Lewis Death and Burial Site.

For Mount Locust/Mile Post 15.5

Park staff will:

Complete the shift from guided tours to informal interactions between staff/volunteers and visitors.

Identify the basic information that on-site visitors need most and then choose the most promising delivery system(s), perhaps a publication and app.

Shift staff hours to building and sustaining a robust outreach program to schools, youth groups/organizations, and local families. Look for funding that will finance a sustainable education program. Work with local educators to identify program objectives and content. Determine the balance between on-site visits by educators/students and classroom visits by NPS staff and volunteers. Consider using the Teacher-Ranger-Teacher program again in conjunction with a new partnership with Natchez schools and school administrators.

Give a high priority to replacing all outdated, exterior exhibit signs and interpretive panels including those that do not meet accessibility standards. Begin by determining locations and content objectives.



The interior of the historic Mount Locust building was the home of the Ferguson-Chamberlain family for decades.
Credit: NPS/© Marc Muench

Use this as an opportunity to make the interpretive story more inclusive and diverse. Upgrade the signs associated with the enslaved person's cemetery.

Provide a map of the site (a flat map mounted on the breezeway wall or a 3-D tactile map mounted on a plinth, for example) that will encourage visitors to see all the individual components of the site (stand, cemeteries, trail, Old Trace).

Experiment with a limited number of evening programs designed to attract Natchez residents.

Explore the potential for using audio to enhance interpretation of the stand. Use several different personal narratives to introduce visitors to the diversity of Mount Locust residents.

Recruit a partner, perhaps a local garden group, to plant and tend a small agricultural plot similar to the tobacco field adjacent to the Tobacco Barn farther north along the Parkway. Ideally, this field would include cotton and perhaps kitchen produce used by stand residents.

Experiment with an activity that asks each visitor to see the site through the eyes of an actual Mount Locust resident or traveler on the Old Trace. Provide biographies that suggest how historical characters experienced the site—places they frequented, chores they did, recorded events in their lives, etc. Be sure to include a way to discuss and compare how personal demographics (gender, age, race, etc.) influenced how individuals lived at Mount Locust.

Develop a strategy that will fund an accurate depiction of Mount Locust during the period of emphasis. This might be art or computer-generated reconstruction of buildings and landscapes. The intent is to allow audiences to visualize the stand as one of several on-site buildings, and to place those buildings into much larger agricultural and Old Trace landscapes.

Ensure that a site trail to each primary interpretive feature is accessible to visitors with limited mobility.

Create a video of the interior of the stand so that there is an alternative to walking to and entering the building.

For Parkway Information Cabin (Ridgeland)/Mile Post 102.4

Park staff will:

Identify a location for a landscaped welcome area that might include information/map (explaining what the site offers for both travelers and locals looking for recreational trails), a water bottle refill station, a well-designed bulletin board for safety information and special events schedule, seating, shade, and traveler information dispensed via an electronic, partner-maintained kiosk.

Either in the welcome area or in the breezeway of the cabin, install a map with local points of interest. Consider making the map tactile.

Create a trailhead where the existing trail leaves the parking lot. Include an NPS arrowhead, map, and information useful to those using the trail (distances, intersecting trails, notable features to look for along the trail, safety information, resource management concerns,

and environmental stewardship messages, recycling, for example).

Work with partners, the Mississippi Craft Center in particular, to recruit and co-host artisan demonstrations and musical performances related to the Parkway's primary themes. Craftsmen could, for example, talk with visitors about how they use natural materials in the creative process. Tribal members and 1812 re-enactors could be invited to present programs on site, and encourage visits to other Parkway features.

Develop a sign system that can be used to announce special events scheduled for the cabin complex. Since a large number of local drivers pass by the cabin on a daily basis, an easily read sign could increase local use of the cabin and increase visitation for events.

Devise a way to add "open" and "closed" to the large NPS sign located at the cabin.

Create and implement a strategy to recruit, train, and supervise a sustainable number of volunteers to help staff the cabin and assist with events and group visits.

Explore the use of the site trail for educational and youth groups.

Develop a recycling activity for the Parkway's Junior Ranger booklet.

Experiment with providing environmental stewardship messages (climate change, recycling, etc.) in the site restrooms or other appropriate areas, perhaps via small interpretive signs.

For Parkway Visitor Center (Tupelo)/Mile Post 266.0

Park staff will:

Work collaboratively with local convention and visitor bureau (CVB) staff as they design and develop a prototype electronic information kiosk. The intent is to use kiosks to dispense visiting information for both the Parkway and for sites within the Natchez Trace corridor, in adjacent towns, and along intersecting highways. CVB staff will be responsible for hardware and software. Parkway staff will provide content, a procedure to ensure that NPS information is up-to-date, and Parkway location(s) for the kiosk(s).

Develop a free series of "bookmarks" that can be distributed at the visitor center (and other staffed locations). To test the idea, an initial bookmark will identify the top 10 sites associated with one of the Parkway's primary themes. A joint bookmark with Natchez National Historical Park might highlight complementary sites in the southern section of the Parkway and the city of Natchez. Another bookmark, funded by a partner, might list sites in Tupelo, but outside Parkway boundaries. If these experiments are successful, the number of bookmarks can be expanded to other themes and developed for other segments of the Parkway.

Provide an easily changed door "sticker" with a contact number or website address that makes visiting information available to travelers who arrive when the visitor center is closed. These stickers might be funded by the Natchez Trace Compact (NTC).

Prominently post contact numbers and web addresses with traveler information (sites and services) on Parkway bulletin boards. Approach NTC about the possibility of providing outdoor brochure boxes for NTC information.

Create and maintain a calendar of Parkway events that can be added to the Parkway's website and distributed to attract local visitors.

Experiment with evening events offered in or adjacent to the visitor center. The types of programs will depend on willing presenters; the Parkway will host, not necessarily present the programs.

Work with local partners and willing participants to identify additional daytime programs, perhaps for weekends, designed to attract local visitors and engage them in Parkway activities.

Identify local groups interested in using the Parkway trails in the vicinity of the visitor center. Consider runners and those who might be interested in an outdoor, natural area for fitness activities.

Complete the virtual geocaching activity already in planning.

Work with Tupelo-area Girl Scouts to finalize a partnership that uses the natural area across the Parkway from the visitor center.

Develop a calendar for planning and staging changing exhibits on the walls of the visitor center theater. Link exhibit content to themes, resource issues, upcoming events, etc.

Contact existing local groups or organizations interested in Parkway history (rather than Old Trace) to co-sponsor "share your history" events. Participants would be invited to bring photos of family outings that used the Parkway, Parkway construction, Parkway events, etc. Staff might collect oral histories related to the Parkway. With permission, materials gathered during these events might be displayed in the future.

**For Meriwether Lewis/
Mile Post 385.9
Park staff will:**

Complete installation of a trailer pad and hookup so the Parkway can recruit a volunteer to provide staffing for the cabin and exhibits.

Work with park partners to schedule an annual "living history" event commemorating Lewis; since Lewis died on October 11, a fall event would be appropriate.

Create a way to engage visitors by soliciting comments. Post a question for visitors to answer. For example, when you think about your visit today, what will you remember most?

Since on-site visitors ask questions of any uniformed employee, explore the feasibility of splitting the salary of an employee between interpretation and maintenance, providing training in informal contact skills, and encouraging more staff/visitor interaction.

Collaborate with the Lewis County librarian to develop a program that reaches out to local residents and asks them to share memories/

materials related to the park and family or school visits. Co-host a “reunion” that invites local residents of Lewis County to come to the site for a day of activities and memory sharing. Use the collected information to stage an event or exhibit in the library and/or at the Parkway.

Develop a publication that encourages exploration and discovery at the Lewis site. This print piece will suggest where to start a site visit, explain what there is to see (trails, monument, cabin/exhibits, markers, etc.), and how to learn more about Lewis not only at the site but also in the region. The publication will be available for download on the website.

Collaborate with a willing partner to co-host an evening event associated with period history, perhaps storytelling or music.

Recommendations for Other Parkway Venues

Southern Entrance

Park staff will:

Examine the existing signs/bulletin board at the southern entrance to the Parkway and revise what is posted and interpreted. Refocus on what is most important to those arriving for a Parkway journey (what the Parkway is, how to understand Parkway landscapes, how to choose stops, and how to get travel information, for example). Highlight a limited number of safety or current resource management issues. Ensure that there is a photo op, adjacent to the Parkway entrance sign for example, that allows visitors to

preserve an iconic moment in their visit.

Add a capstone message for those who are leaving the Parkway, a short summary message. For example, “We hope you enjoyed your journey through 10,000 years of history.” Or, “Complete your journey by visiting Natchez National Historical Park.”

Explore a partnership with a local high school and develop service projects designed to enhance the entry experience, perhaps help with litter or resource management issues.

Rocky Springs/Mile Post 54.8

Park staff will:

Write objectives for updated interpretive exhibits inside the contact station at the entrance to Rocky Springs. Identify visual materials that might support the proposed storyline. When the interpretive intent is clear, seek funding to develop the exhibits in house or by contract.

Consider the contact station as a location for an information kiosk provided and maintained by a Natchez Trace Compact partner. Provide a download site for NPMAP.

Consider Rocky Springs as a possible site for a tactile, 3-D map that would help travelers and campers discover and enjoy the whole site.

Recruit and train a campground host who would be on site to provide information and interpretation.

For Jeff Busby/MP 193.1

Create objectives for re-purposing the existing exhibit shelter atop the mountain at Jeff Busby. Consider the content for new, replacement interpretive panels as well as the potential for a modest stage or performance space.

Experiment with night sky programs or other evening events. Explore a cooperative program with French Camp Academy's observatory.

Use temporary signs to interpret the view from Little Mountain including the environmental value of the greenbelt corridor created by the Parkway.

Discuss increased emphasis on bicycle safety with the staff of the Kosciusko Visitor Center.

For Civil War Battlefields

Park staff will:

Sustain ties with Mississippi's Final Stands Interpretive Center and explore ways to create additional complementary interpretive media and programs.

Work with Mississippi Final Stands Interpretive Center to revise the appearance and content of the driving tour for Brices Cross Roads.

Provide a weather-proof box for dispensing a driving tour of Tupelo Battlefield.

Provide directions/signs/maps that connect the 1st day battlefield at Tupelo to the events and battlefield of the 2nd day.

Include the outdated wayside exhibits at both battlefields in any initiative to revise and update outdoor interpretive panels.

Consider including artwork that depicts a crucial event for each battle. Contact NPMAP staff about updated maps.

For Chickasaw Village/MP 261.8

Park staff will:

Work with the Chickasaw Nation to co-sponsor educational/interpretive events or demonstrations (dance, sport, pottery, storytelling, etc.).

Identify an appropriate interpretive medium (site bulletin, temporary sign, website feature, etc.) to interpret that importance of prairie restoration.

For Colbert Ferry/MP 327.3

Park staff will:

Explore the feasibility of using volunteers, recreational, or birding groups to provide more interpretation of natural resources and orientation at the boat dock.

Experiment with a self-guided brochure/site bulletin that links the history of the Old Trace to the natural resources in the area.

Discuss additional programming with the Florence Convention and Visitors Bureau.

Produce and install a Parkway map in the breezeway of the contact station.

For Gordon House/MP 407.7

Park staff will:

Consider ways for those visitors intent on peeking in the house windows to have an interpretive experience. Perhaps create artwork for a window that puts people into an interior setting.

Replace the out-of-date outdoor wayside exhibits. Consider replicating the approach used for Meriwether Lewis, i.e., combine cutout figures that humanize the Gordon House storyline with interpretive text linked to the Parkway's primary themes. Choose locations that help visitors understand the early 18th-century appearance of not only the house but the surrounding landscape, including the river ferry.

Rethink the content of the bulletin boards on site. Provide a message hierarchy with headlines followed by more detailed information. Include safety information related to the site or segment of the Parkway. Include a map of the site that includes both current and historical features. Include a contact phone number and website address(es) for corridor visiting information.

Experiment with an acceptable way to mark and interpret the location of historical features that are gone. For example, markers showing the corners of foundations or mow-over, in ground signs).

Consider ways to make an accessible trail to Duck River and the historical site of the ferry.

Include an interpretive panel on the natural history of the area, perhaps the importance of rivers and creeks to an Old Trace traveler and ferry operator.

The Gordon house is located on the Duck River in Tennessee, and was the home of John and Dolly Gordon who farmed the land and operated a river ferry. Milepost 407.7. Credit: NPS/© Marc Muench





A field trip to the Parkway engages students in unique learning experiences that they will carry with them through life.
Credit: NPS

For North Entrance

Park staff will:

Explore the feasibility of acquiring and staffing a mobile trailer or van that can be used at a variety of locations along the Parkway, including both the north and south entries as well as off-site at schools and regional events. The trailer or van could carry portable exhibits and be used to dispense visiting information.

Discuss possible cooperative activities with Timberland Park, operated by Williamson County Parks and Recreation.

Use the existing bulletin board to provide additional information on bicycle safety and opportunities for horseback riding. Create a hierarchy of messages so that these topics are prominent and easy to digest.

Add a capstone message for those who are leaving the Parkway, a short summary message for example,

“We hope you enjoyed Natchez Trace Parkway, built, preserved, and maintained for you by the National Park Service.”

Recommendations for Targeted Audiences

For Underserved Groups

Park staff will:

Work with Ser Boxley and the Friends of the Forks of the Road to identify ways to add more interpretation of civil rights issues.

Identify Parkway locations that would make good locations for family picnics for local families. Contact community groups, including church groups, and invite them to join the NPS for a Picnic on the Parkway. Explore the potential for connecting with African American families who traditionally use the Ross Barnett Reservoir for fishing and picnicking. Strengthen the relationship between the NPS and both Alcorn

State University and Jackson State University. Both are HBCUs (Historically Black Colleges and Universities) located near the Parkway. Discuss ways to share historical information and research skills, use teacher education training, and identify a pool of potential employees/volunteers.

For Educators and Students (elementary and middle school grades)

Park staff will:

Explore the feasibility of offering environmental camps using Parkway venues, perhaps in cooperation with a willing partner(s).

Since transportation and time away from the classroom are challenges that are difficult to overcome in today's public school environment, staff (perhaps supplemented by trained volunteers) will explore alternative staffing schedules that assign time for classroom visits to local schools instead of guided tours with limited attendance.

Work with local educators to design a program of professional development that leads to continuing education units (CEU). Participate in workshops such as the Tupelo School District's annual professional development workshop (May Institute).

Work with local educators to create a useful, basic package of materials that introduces teachers to the Parkway and what it offers. Create on-site as well as "take home" activities for family audiences. Work with local educators to disseminate

these activities and stimulate interest in family visits.

Develop relationships that facilitate distribution of information about what the Parkway offers through school newsletters and publicity.

Develop more online resources for educators. Begin by discussing, with educators, what they would find most useful.

For Youth and Millennials (birth years ranging from the early 1980s to the early 2000s)

Park staff will:

Experiment with a variety of events: provide access to places seldom seen; co-sponsor music performances; work with local groups to design and offer fitness events; or develop "quests" such as directed historic scavenger hunts or physical fitness challenges that will invite non-intrusive exploration.

Expand dialogue with students at high schools and colleges near the Parkway, particularly with student organizations, to identify ways to engage their members. Explore ways to offer Parkway venues for activities in return for help with preservation. Identify interpretive projects (design, writing, photography, lesson planning, etc.) that students can help plan and create.

Expand contact with local youth organizations (4H, FFA, civic and church organizations that include youth).

Adjust existing kids programs to engage younger parents.

Send targeted invitations to high schools and youth organizations for regular fitness or volunteer events hosted with the Parkway.

Experiment with a youth advisory group similar to the teacher advisory groups used by many national parks. Invite interested groups, representatives, or individuals to provide online feedback on programming ideas, or suggest other possibilities.

Recommendations to Enhance the Parkway Journey

Park staff will:

Begin the process of developing a driving tour of the Parkway. Identify the interpretive objectives for the tour program and identify how the content can be organized. Options might include: themed tracks, story tracks told from multiple personal perspectives, or landscape education (how to read a landscape). Collect material for content development. Determine a strategy for funding and production (Eastern National, for example). When all preliminaries have been addressed, choose the best delivery system available at the time (what will work best along the 400+ miles of the Parkway and survive longest in the rapidly changing environment of technology and media).

Explore the use of additional social media including Instagram/hashtags to provide travelers with images



Volunteers from the Tupelo High School Cross Country team help make improvements on the Natchez Trace National Scenic Trail which they frequently use.
Credit: NPS

of Parkway pull-offs, photos, or reviews that will help them decide when and where to stop. By actively creating hashtags, the NPS can shape at least some of the Parkway information available online. Invite an online following by providing consistently up-to-date and accurate information.

Search for specific groups among the identified targeted audiences and invite them to follow/connect with NPS posts.

Initiate an effort to make the NPS website more responsible and “friendly” to mobile devices. Alter or adjust content to work on multiple platforms (from PDF to HTML, for example).

Explore ways to enhance interpretation of the Parkway’s natural resources and link those stories to the history of the Old Trace and Parkway. For example, identify and then create a strategy to replace out-of-date signs along the Parkway’s nature trails; create a system of temporary signs that can be used to interpret resource management issues and research projects, and consider ways to tap into the iNaturalist (iNaturalist.org) program without jeopardizing sensitive Parkway resources.

Staffing and Training

The current levels of staffing are insufficient to provide recommended and expected services in a park of this magnitude. With over six million recreational users and a permanent staff of eight, the visitor to interpreter ratio is about three-quarters of a million to one.

2014 staffing levels for interpretation

Number of permanent positions,
8 Permanent FTE,
6.4 Temporary FTE,
3.2 Volunteer hours for
interpretation, 6,553.50

Training for park interpretive staff should include:

NPS interpreter training: To ensure that permanent and seasonal staff as well as volunteers reach the recommended competencies for expected duties.

Project Management Information System (PMIS): This is an important source of additional funding for interpretive projects.

Non-personal services: This is an important part of reaching Parkway visitors, and a somewhat unique area of emphasis for interpretive divisions.

Partnership development: Our partners continue to play an important part in visitor services, and it is important to nurture existing partnerships as well as initiate new ones.

Research to Support Interpretive Programs

Fund research that will explore the history of Mount Locust's enslaved population.

Fund research that explores the ethnography of Mount Locust's residents, both free and enslaved.

Implementation Charts

The charts that follow indicate when to expect action on Part 2's recommendations. Where noted, action may be dependent on funding, staffing, or partner assistance.

Site: Southern Terminus			
What	Who	Funding Needed	When (year)
Revise content/appearance of existing signs/bulletin board	NPS	Yes	1-3
Explore high school partnership for service projects	NPS	No	1-3
Add capstone message for those leaving	NPS	Yes	3-5

Site: Mount Locust/Mile Post 15.5			
What	Who	Funding Needed	When (year)
Complete shift from tours to informal	NPS	No	1-3
Identify/provide basic visit info	NPS	No	1-3
Shift staff to outreach	NPS	No	1-3
Create video of stand interior	Partner	Yes/PMIS	1-3
Provide site map	NPS	printing	1-3
Experiment with evening programs	NPS	No	1-3
Recruit partner to plant/tend ag. plot	NPS/Partner	No (or minimal)	1-3
Experiment with biographical activity	NPS/Partner	No	1-3
Fund/produce accurate historical art	NPS/ Partner consult	Yes	3-5
Ensure site trail accessibility	NPS	Yes	3-5
Explore use of audio for the cabin	NPS	Yes	3-5
Replace outdated exterior signs/ panels	NPS	Yes	3-5

Site: Rocky Springs/Mile Post 54.8			
What	Who	Funding Needed	When (year)
Consider contact station as kiosk location	NPS/Partner	No	1-3
Recruit/train campground host	NPS	No	1-3
Write objectives for contact station exhibits	NPS	No	1-3
Consider Rocky Springs for 3D map	NPS	Yes	3-5

Site: Cabin Ridgeland/Mile Post 102.4			
What	Who	Funding Needed	When (year)
Identify location for welcome area	NPS	No	1-3
Develop special events sign system	NPS	Printing	1-3
Explore use of trail for ed/youth groups	Partner	No	1-3
Install a map with point of interest	NPS	Yes	3-5
Create a trailhead	NPS	Yes	3-5
Recruit/co-host demos	NPS	No	3-5

Site: Jeff Busby/ Mile Post 193.1			
What	Who	Funding Needed	When (year)
Increase partner emphasis on bicycle safety	NPS/Partner	No	1-2
Experiment with night sky programs/evening events	Partner	No	3-5
Interpret viewshed and greenbelt corridor	NPS	Possible if not in house printing	5

Site: Chickasaw Village/Mile Post 261.8			
What	Who	Funding Needed	When (year)
Work with Chickasaw Nation on events	NPS/Chickasaw Nation	No	1-2
Identify medium for prairie interpretation	NPS	No	3-5

Site: Parkway Visitor Center (Tupelo)/Mile Post 266			
What	Who	Funding Needed	When (year)
Develop free "bookmark"	NPS	Printing	1-2
Add contacts to bulletin boards	NPS	Printing	1-2
Create/maintain calendar of events	NPS	No	1-2
Identify programs for weekend days	NPS	No	1-2
Finalize Girl Scout partnership	NPS/Partner	No	1-2
Complete geocaching activity	NPS	No	2-3
Develop changing exhibits calendar	NPS	No	2-3
Experiment with evening events	NPS/Partner	No	3-5
Identify groups for fitness activities	NPS/Partner	No	3-5
Co-sponsor "share your history" event	NPS/Partner	Yes	3-5
Work with CVB on info. kiosk	NPS/Partner	No	3-5
Provide "sticker" for contact info.	Compact	No	3-4

Site: Colbert Ferry/Mile Post 327.3			
What	Who	Funding Needed	When (year)
Explore using volunteers for natural resource interpretation	Possible partnership with UNA	Possible/PMIS	1-3
Discuss new programming with the Florence CVB	NPS	No	3-5
Produce/install Parkway map	NPS	Yes	3-5
Consider 3-D map	NPS	No (to consider) Yes to develop	5

Site: Meriwether Lewis/ Mile Post 385.9			
What	Who	Funding Needed	When (year)
Complete trailer pad & hookup	NPS	Yes/PMIS	1
Explore shared position	NPS	Possibly	1-2
Collaborate on memory outreach	NPS/Partner	No	4-5
Develop site discovery publication	NPS	Printing, if not in house	2-3
Schedule commemorative event	NPS/Partner	Yes	3-5
Create visitor comment activity	NPS	No	3
Co-host evening event	NPS/Partner	Yes	3

Site: Gordon House/Mile Post 407.7			
What	Who	Funding Needed	When (year)
Rethink bulletin board content/appearance	NPS	No	1-2
Replace out-of-date waysides	NPS	Yes/PMIS	2-3
Mark/interpret lost historical features	NPS	No	5
Make trail to Duck River accessible	NPS	Yes/PMIS	5
Add panel on natural history	NPS	Yes/PMIS	5
Create interpretive exhibit for window	NPS	Yes/PMIS	5

Site: Northern Terminus			
What	Who	Funding Needed	When (year)
Rethink bulletin board appearance/content	NPS	No	1-2
Discuss cooperative activities with Timberland	NPS/Partner	No	2-3
Add capstone message for travelers leaving	NPS	Yes	3-4
Explore feasibility of mobile trailer/van	NPS	No (yes to purchase)	3-5

Site: Civil War Battlefields			
What	Who	Funding Needed	When (year)
Sustain ties with Mississippi Final Stands (MFS)	NPS/partner	No	1-2
Provide media connecting battlefields	NPS/Partner	Printing	3-5
Provide weather-proof box for Tupelo Battlefield tour	NPS/Partner	Possible shared	1-2
With MFS, revise Brices Cross Rds driving tour	NPS/Partner	Printing	2-4
Replace outdated interpretive panels	NPS	Yes/PMIS	3-5

Audience: Underserved Groups			
What	Who	Funding Needed	When (year)
Strengthen relationships with HBCUs	NPS/Partner	No	1-2
Work with partners to interpret civil rights	NPS/Partner	No	3-5
Identify locations for family picnics	NPS/Partner	No	3-5

Audience: Educators and Students			
What	Who	Funding Needed	When (year)
Develop relationships to distribute info. through schools	NPS	No	1-2
Explore scheduling classroom visits	NPS	No	1-2
Work with educators on professional dev.	NPS	No	1-2
Work with educators on basic info package	NPS	No	1-2
Create on-site/"take home" family activities	NPS	No	1-3
Include more online resources for educators	NPS	No	1-3
Explore feasibility of environmental camp	NPS	No	3-5

Audience: Youth and Millennials			
What	Who	Funding Needed	When (year)
Invite high schools/youth organ. to fitness events	NPS/UNA	No	1-2
Experiment with youth advisory group	NPS	No	1-2
Adjust JR Ranger Programs to include younger parents	NPS	No	3-5
Expand contact with local youth organizations	NPS/Partners	No	1-3
Expand dialogue with nearby students	NPS	No	1-3
Experiment with new activities	NPS	Yes	1-3
Explore feasibility of environmental camp	NPS	No	3-5

Audience: Visitors - Enhance the Parkway Journey			
What	Who	Funding Needed	When (year)
Explore additional social media	NPS	No	1-2
Make NPS website more responsive	NPS	No	1-2
Begin developing a driving tour	NPS	Yes	3-5
Identify groups, invite them to follow NPS posts	NPS	No	2-3
Enhance natural resource interpretation	NPS	No	1-3

Participants

The following participated in an interpretive theme workshop on March 4, 2015:

Name	Agency/Association
Kent Bain	Mississippi Hills National Heritage Area
Kristin Biondi Schwarz	NPS/NATR, Park Guide-Interpretation
Deanna Boensch	NPS/NATR, Natural Resource Specialist
Jesse Burton	NPS/NATR, Ecologist, NPS Fire Management
Brady Davis	Chickasaw Nation, Homelands Affairs Manager
Jane Farmer	NPS/NATR, Park Ranger-Interpretation
Marcus Foster	NPS/NATR, IT Specialist
Amy Genke	NPS/NATR, Supervisory Park Ranger-Interpretation
Neal McCoy	Tupelo Convention and Visitors Bureau
Lisa McInnis	NPS/NATR, Chief of Resource Management
Mary Risser	NPS/NATR, Superintendent
Judy Sizemore	Muscle Shoals National Heritage Area
Peggy Scherbaum	NPS/Harpers Ferry Center, Interpretive Specialist
Chris Smith	NPS/NATR, Cultural Resource Specialist
Greg Smith	NPS/NATR, Landscape Architect
Tony Turnbow	Natchez Trace Parkway Association
Terry Wildy	NPS/NATR, Chief of Interpretation
Ron Thomson	Workshop Facilitator, Writer

The following participated in a Stakeholder Workshop
on March 24, 2015, in Hohenwald, MS:

Terry Bunch	Hohenwald Housing Authority
Jane Farmer	NPS/NATR, Park Ranger-Interpretation
Tommy Haskins	Natchez Trace Parkway Association, Volunteer
Barbara Hinson	Lewis County Historical Society
Gay Hinson	Pilot Club of Hohenwald
Janet Johnson	Lewis Chamber of Commerce
Dick Jordan	Natchez Trace Parkway Association, President
Annette Peery	Pilot Club of Hohenwald, Lewis County Historical Society
Bud Pride	Natchez Trace Parkway Association, Alabama Chapter
Todd Montgomery	The Elephant Sanctuary
Crystal Nash	Lewis County Public Library, Hohenwald, AL
Peggy Scherbaum	NPS/Harpers Ferry Center, Interpretive Specialist
Deborah Warnick	Williamson County Convention and Visitor Bureau
Terry Wildy	NPS/NATR, Chief of Interpretation
Ron Thomson	Workshop Facilitator, Writer

The following participated in a Stakeholder Workshop
on March 25, 2015, in Tupelo, MS:

Edwina Carpenter	Mississippi's Final Stands Interpretive Center
Brady Davis	Chickasaw Homeland Affairs
Susan Dent	N.E.M.S. Historical and Genealogy Society,
	Mary Stuart Chapter D.A.R., Towne Society
	C.A.R, OREN Duinn City Museum
Jane Farmer	NPS/NATR, Park Ranger-Interpretation
Jack Keene	Tupelo Resident
Bob Perry	Natchez Trace Parkway Association
Annie Perry	Natchez Trace Parkway Association
Adam Prentice	University of Mississippi
Peggy Scherbaum	NPS/Harpers Ferry Center,
	Interpretive Specialist
Terry Swindol	Local Historian
Terry Wildy	NPS/NATR, Chief of Interpretation
Ron Thomson	Workshop Facilitator, Writer

The following participated in a Stakeholder Workshop
on April 8, 2015, in Ridgeland, MS:

Marsha Barham	Clinton Visitor Center
Sam Beibers	MS Museum of Natural Science
Bea Berry	Ridgeland Resident
Bryant Boswell	Natchez Trace Parkway Association
Anne Campbell	MS Craftsmen's Guild
Stacey Everett	MS Department of Archives and History
Amy Genke	NPS/NATR, Supervisory Park Ranger-Interpretation
Jacob Dinkelaker	NPS/NATR, Park Ranger-Interpretation
Linda Gibson	Clinton Visitor Center
Claire Gwaltney	MS Department of Archives and History
Chellese Hall	MS Children's Museum
Donna Holdiness	Natchez Trace Parkway Association
Meenie Jackson	MS Children's Museum
Hap Owen	Communication Arts
Nancy Perkins	Executive Director, Mississippi Craft Center/ MS Craftsmen's Guild
Peggy Scherbaum	NPS/Harpers Ferry Center, Interpretive Specialist
Mary Risser	NPS/NATR, Superintendent
Mina Thorgeson	Ridgeland Tourism
Tom Watts	Natchez Trace Parkway Association
Mary Beth Wilkerson	Ridgeland Tourism
Ron Thomson	Workshop Facilitator, Writer

The following participated in a Stakeholder Workshop
on April 9, 2015, in Natchez, MS:

Kiwanis Barnes	Natchez Early College
Geraldine Brown	West Elementary, Natchez-Adams School District
Trevor Brown	Historic Natchez Foundation
Jacob Dinkelaker	NPS/NATR, Park Ranger-Interpretation
Amy Genke	NPS/NATR, Supervisory Park Ranger-Interpretation
Ser Seshsh Ab Heter-Boxly	Friends of Forks of the Road
Kathleen Jenkins	Natchez National Historical Park
Brandy Mann	Cathedral High School, Natchez
Jeff Mansell	Natchez National Historical Park
Mimi Miller	Historic Natchez Foundation
Linda Patten	West Elementary, Natchez-Adams School District
Stephen Richardson	Public Relations Coordinator, Natchez-Adams School District
Mary Risser	NPS/NATR, Superintendent
Peggy Scherbaum	NPS/Harpers Ferry Center, Interpretive Specialist
Ron Thomson	Workshop Facilitator, Writer

The following participated in a Recommendations Workshop
on August 13, 2015, in Tupelo, MS:

Deanna Boensch	Resource Management NPS/NATR
Andy Danneker	NPS/NATR, Park Ranger-Interpretation
Brady Davis	Chickasaw Nation, Homelands Affairs Manager
Jacob Dinkelaker	NPS/NATR, Park Ranger-Interpretation
Kevin Downs	Facilities Management NPS/NATR
Jane Farmer	NPS/NATR, Park Ranger-Interpretation
Amy Genke	NPS/NATR, Supervisory Park Ranger-Interpretation
Neal McCoy	Tupelo CVB
Melanie Sander	NPS/NATR, Park Ranger-Interpretation
Peggy Scherbaum	NPS/HFC
Chris Smith	Resource Management NPS/NATR
Greg Smith	Resource Management NPS/NATR
Brent Ward	Riggs-Ward
Terry Wildy	NPS/NATR, Chief of Interpretation
Ron Thomson	Workshop Facilitator, Writer

The following participated in a Recommendations Workshop
on Friday August 14, 2015, Tupelo, MS

Edwina Carpenter	Mississippi's Final Stands Interpretive Center
Andy Danneker	NPS/NATR, Park Ranger-Interpretation
Brady Davis	Chickasaw Nation, Homelands Affairs Manager
Joe Davis	NPS/SHIL
Jacob Dinkelaker	NPS/NATR, Park Ranger-Interpretation
Kevin Downs	Facilities Management NPS/NATR
Jane Farmer	NPS/NATR, Park Ranger-Interpretation
Amy Genke	NPS/NATR, Supervisory Park Ranger-Interpretation
Kristy R. Luse	Tupelo Public School District
Mary Ann Plasencia	Tupelo Public School District
Melanie Sander	NPS/NATR, Park Ranger-Interpretation
Peggy Scherbaum	NPS/HFC
Brent Ward	Riggs-Ward
Terry Wildy	NPS/NATR, Chief of Interpretation
Ron Thomson	Workshop Facilitator, Writer

Document design by Riggs Ward Design, Richmond, Virginia

Harpers Ferry Center
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior